BUSINESS / B1
Gov't moves sale
of SMC, Meralco
stakes to 2008

ENTERTAINMENT / F1
Despite nude photo,
Fil-Am star gets
Disney Co. support

SPORTS / A29
Ateneo Eagles nip
La Salle Archers
in the nick of time

Color Me Beautiful
IS THIS WEEK YOUR CHANCE TO SAY YES?

Apec steel fences rented from Bayani?

By Julie Liong-Javellana

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA (MA PLDT)—The leaders looked strangely familiar, arrayed for the photo ...

Eve-Precision Mech-

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, September 10, 2007 44 | 11 sections | Vol. 21 / No. 274 P18 | www.inquirer.net

9-hour Filipino film cited at Venice festival

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LAS VEGAS'S HIRO HOSPITALIZATION ...

Announcing mga Englander (Death to the Land of Evasion)" won the Golden Lion Special Mention award in the first issue (Orizzonti) Documentary section of the

Apec leaders push global trade talks to final phase

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—PACIFIC RIM leaders yesterday pledged their political will and flexibility to help jumpstart global trade talks into their final phase this year, wrapping up their annual summit that also struck an agreement on tackling global warming.

"There has never been a more urgent need to make progress" in world trade negotiations, according to a final statement released by leaders of the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum, which includes trading powers China, Japan and the United States.

Negotiations in the so-called Doha round resumed in Geneva last week on the basis of two new proposals to break a deadlock between rich and poor nations over how much to cut barriers to agricultural and industrial trade.

The Doha round was launched to the Qatari capital in November 2001 to help poor countries improve their lot through freer trade rules.

Negotiators have stumbled over reducing farm subsidies in the United States, Europe and Japan, and scaling back industrial tariffs to emerging markets like China, India, Brazil and South Africa.

Apec leaders said the overall outcome of the WTO negotiations "should depend on early progress in bridging gaps in these two critical areas."

"We pledge the political will, flexibility and ambition to ensure the Doha Round negotiations enter their final phase this year," the leaders' statement said. "We call on our WTO partners to join in this critical effort."

SPECULATIONS 44

RP, China to review broadband project

PRESIDENTS Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines and Hu Jintao of China shake hands before the start of their bilateral talks at the Sofitel Hotel in Sydney.

Cabinet to take up deal and recommend action

By Julie Liong-Javellana

SYDNEY (MA PLDT)—ON THE SIDELINES OF THE ASIA-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit here, President Macapagal-Arroyo talked with Chinese President Hu Jintao yesterday about the controversial national broadband network (NBN) project whose $329-million contract was won by China's ZTE Corp.

The meeting, called at the last minute, came amid calls from leaders of the Philippine Congress to scrap the ZTE contract, which was allegedly attended by bribery and overpricing.

The day before, Ms. Arroyo said the world's finest the recommendation of her officials before deciding what to do about the NBN contract.

At the meeting between the Philippine and Chinese leaders, there was no specific mention of the ZTE contract, only the NBN project, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

The NBN is envisioned to establish a seamless connectivity of landline, cellular and Internet services among all government offices nationwide.

Bunye said the two leaders had a brief discussion on the NBN project under the subject of ODA (official development assistance).

"She assured President Hu that she would discuss the matter with her Cabinet. In the meantime, she suggested that Trade Secretary Peter Favila and Chinese Commerce Minister Bo Xilai work together to resolve the issue. President Hu agreed with President Arroyo's suggestion," Bunye said.

China and the Philippines signed a $1.6-billion loan agreement on Sep. 25 in Malaki.

Purdue said last week that $400 million of the loan facility to be extended by China Export-Import Bank was not specifically intended for any project. He said it was up to the Philippines to "nominate" a project for funding.

DEAL CHINA 44

ANTISMUGGLING DRIVE

Is there a Palace bagman in Subic?

(See also page)

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT LIES to be the United States' largest naval base outside the mainland. Security there used to be tight and impregnable.

But under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, such things as smuggling rackets and oil—on a significant scale cannot even be stopped.

The activity goes on under the watch of the Bureau of Customs, the Subic Metropolitan Authority, two presidential task forces, the Land Trans portation Office and many ar lity and military groups.

One concerned Subic official, who requested anonymity, says in a letter to the Inquirer that included documents on results of official investigations.

"The glaring fact is one of Mala cañang's favorite generals ... earlier designated to Subic to check on smuggling activities ironically ended up enabling the smugglers himself.

"By virtue of his position, this 'bagman' of Malacañang has always been involved in the chick of the investigation whenever a smuggling operation up, as with the gas/oil fuel smuggling and the recent Tommy Cuco controversy.

"The last(st) how much effort and vigilance honest true port officials might exert, the problem of smuggling can never be solved if the culprit is one of them."

I-TEAM PALACE 44

I-TEAM Report
Fernando del Mundo
Chief

SMUGGLERS have dismissed the nationally televised wrecking of her luxury cars at the Subic Freeport on Aug. 15 as a sham.

Goods cannot be released without official knowledge

By Tonnie Ovejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—WHAT is the extent of car smuggling at the free port? Who are the smugglers and the government officials they are allegedly conspiring with?

These questions come up after three luxurious destroyed 18 cars here on Aug. 16 in a nationally televised show of resolve to stop the smuggling of cars that has deprived the nation of billions of pesos in tax revenues.

Retired Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, senior deputy administrator for operations at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), estimates that one of

GOODS 44

Senate has been nemesis of both Estrada, GMA

By Amando Doronila

JUST AS THE SANDIGAN-bayan brings closure to the six-year trial of the 39-billion plunder case against deposed President Joseph Estrada, the Senate has reopened hearings on the controversial "Hello Garci" wiretapped tapes.

ANALYSIS

The time, President Macapagal-Arroyo is on the ropes, accused of attempting to tamper with the 2004 presidential election returns.

SENATE 44

OBSESSED President Joseph Estrada visits his ailing mother at the San Juan Medical Center.

Erap sees 102-yr-old mother in hospital bed

By Joseph E. Uy and Kristine L. Alave

HE CAME TO ASK FOR HER blessing before confronting his fate. There were no tears shed, no words uttered. Only a brief gaze passed between them before she fell back to sleep.

"Mama, mama, si Joseph 'to. (This is Joseph)," the country's once most powerful man called out to his mother several times, trying to rouse her back to consciousness.

This was how a close aide described yesterday's private

ERAP SEES 44

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Senators want 'Garci' probe halted

Congressmen look into charging Doble with perjury for lying to them

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AFTER GANGING UP ON THE EX-MILITARY INTELLIGENCE agent who admitted leaking the "Hello Garci" tape, administration senators yesterday called for the scrapping of the Senate hearing on the wiretapping scandal until the opposition came up with a more credible witness than former T/Sgt. Vidal Doble Jr., formerly with the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP).

As far as I'm concerned, there's no need for another hearing," said Sen. Jinkoy Estrada. "We had considered Doble as a 'polluted source' and a 'perjured witness.'"

Sen. Richard Gordon, another administration senator, noted Doble acted for perjuring himself after he changed his testimony at the House of Representatives (where he claimed he was not a wiretapper) and at the Court of Appeals (where he said he did not lie to his bosses).

"The Senate cannot let this pass," he said. "Otherwise, anyone can peddle lies and parade him as witnesses in our investigations. That will put to question the credibility of our future investigations and their results."

Doble, however, had explained over the contradictions in his statements as being the result of threats to his life and that of his family at the time.

Presidential legal adviser Sergio Apostol has also pressed for charges against Doble.

Stop stonewalling

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, however, yesterday urged Malacañang to stop its stonewalling and allow Rosario "Mel" Doblado, chairman emeritus of the Philippine Movieguide Awards, to appear at the Senate and explain her role in the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal cover-up.

Doblado told the senators on Friday that Poblador had offered to help her family get out of the country during Agapaido's rebuttal when he was taken by Bishop Socrates Villegas from his Cubao seminary where he had sought refuge with former National Bureau of Investigation director Samuel Ong to others he had given "the mature copy of the 'Hello Garci'" tape.

Gordon said that under the Revised Penal Code, the crime of perjury is the act of knowingly making untruthful statements under oath or in a sworn manner is punishable by imprisonment of at least six months.

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., however, said Doble did not commit perjury when he changed his Senate testimony.

"It is not punishable to switch stories to change his testimony. As a lawyer who has long been practicing criminal law, I can say that a witness may give a new version of his testimony depending on the circumstances," Pimentel said.

Mr. Senators, concurred with the administration senators who said that "Doble's revised testimony would carry more weight and be more believable if there were other witnesses to corroborate."

Next hearing Friday

The Senate committees on defense and security, accountability of public officers and investigation, and constitutional amendments are scheduled to hold another hearing on Friday.

But Malacañang has indicated it would invoke Executive Order 464 to prevent Cabinet and military officials from testifying in the Senate without the President's permission.

Pimentel said the Senate would definitely summon Poblador who was identified by both Doble and Bishop Villegas as having played a role in the alleged Palace moves to stop the wiretapping exposé from getting out of hand.

The "Hello Garci" tape purportedly contains wiretapped conversations between President Arroyo and former Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on a rigged election result in Pampanga that would have given Mrs. Arroyo a lead over Fernando Poe Jr. in the 2004 presidential polls.

Lacson said more questions needed to be answered now that Malacañang's role had been buried by Doble, and faulting Villegas for a hearing.

"I urge Malacañang to bring Mody Poblador out to face the truth. (Cabinet Secretary Ricardo) Saludo's statement that Mody saved us for sure is misleading. But by saved us for sure is misleading. But by saved us for sure is misleading. But by

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TWENTIES

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THIRTIES

The skin issues: The build-up from make-up, sun damage and the aftermath of late nights and overtime at the office will start to take its toll. Dead skin cells and surface dirt will block your skin and result to a "stressed" appearance because your skin's natural exfoliation process also starts to slow down.

How to solve them: The amazing exfoliation process of **Diamond Peel** will remove all the dead cells and surface dirt on the skin's topmost layer. This will reveal a fresh new layer of baby-smooth, clear skin and an even-toned complexion that radiates with a healthy glow.

FORTIES

The skin issues: By this age, the effects of sun damage will begin to show, especially on skin that was not protected with the right sunblock in the previous years. Freckles, blemishes, skin discoloration and other age spots start to appear.

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FIFTIES AND BEYOND

The skin issues: Wrinkles, fine lines, crow's feet, dryness, droops and sags. The obvious signs of aging can be unforgiving, and even in spite of preventive measures, aging signs are inevitable. The skin becomes thinner and even more susceptible to harmful elements. For women experiencing menopause, the skin is also affected because there is less estrogen production. Estrogen is responsible for keeping the skin hydrated and soft, so as the estrogen levels drop, the skin loses it's elasticity and color.

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All treatments are available at Facial Care Centre. For a free consultation, call 892-SKIN (7546), Cebu - 2337631 and Pampanga - 9613404.

Is there a Palace bagman in Subic?

From page B1

The Subic Freeport has become known derisively as the "home of the generals."

There, an increasing number of retired generals are appointed executives of private companies doing business and living in luxury villas.

And there, in what can very well be a smuggler's paradise, everyone's dream car can be had for practically a song, if you believe customs officials based there.

Such sports car treasures as Porsches, Lamborghinis, Ferraris and BMWs have an appraised value of as ridiculously low as $1,000, according to official documents provided by investigators in the location.

Mind-boggling

In fact, a Porsche twin-turbo sells for $99,000 to $100,000 in the foreign market. Add a 100-percent tax if sold here and the country's smuggler exit ranks to simply mind-boggling—especially if the appraiser at Subic puts a value of $1,000 on it for tax purposes.

Each luxury car that is driven out of the sprawling port is not only depriving the treasury of badly needed tax revenues, it is slowly subverting the manufacturing sector and is helping keep the nation a poverty-stricken Third World economy.

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After fertilizer, farmers say next scam in irrigation

By Christian V. Esguerra

AFTER THE P728-MILLION FERTILIZER fund scam in 2004, could another scandal be lurking behind all the government-quickly released or leased at least P1.1 billion for irrigation projects just months before last May's elections?

The militant farmers group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) yesterday called for a congressional investigation of the fully allocation, expressing doubt it actually went toward the rehabilitation of irrigation facilities around the country.

"There is a curious clash in the need not to lose that same amount of funds allotted for farmers were used to bankroll the election campaign of the administration—but this time it is at least three times bigger than the fertilizer scam," said KMP president Rafael Mariano.

The allocation was revealed by Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño during the House committee on appropriations' deliberations on the Department of Agriculture's 2008 budget last week.

Of the P2.2 billion the P1.1-billion outlay was released in two tranches before the May 14 elections—P900 million was issued in January and the balance of P2.6 billion was given in June.

Biraln questioning by Casiño, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said the release of the funds just before the May elections was merely "coincidental."

"But was the period when we really needed to repair the irrigation facilities because there was no rain," Bayan said. "The dry season is the best time to undertake irrigation rehabilitation."

A dismayed shown to the Inquirer by KMP secretary general Sandra Ramos included a list of 57 "focus provinces" that were supposed to have received a portion of the P2.2-billion irrigation budget.

But a check with the National Irrigation Authority's office in some of the provinces showed "projects had not been started and a small number had not been completed," Mariano said.

"When we asked the local NIA [officials] what was taking them so long, they replied that the funds [from the] local level released," he said. "Even could that be when the funds were made available so early in January? The immediate incentive' Yap's statement that it was released at that time to take advantage of the dry weather."

If irrigation rehabilitation work had really been undertaken during the dry season, Mariano said previous the hybrids, Quirino, Laguna, Nueva Vizcaya, Ilocos Norte, Kalinga and Tarlac would not have suffered during the recent dry spell that devastated their crops.

Mariano pegged the destruction in their areas at P650 million.

In some areas like Nueva Ecija, he said the government had come up with "fictitious projects ... so that the people would think everything was above board."

Majority of the supposed target areas for irrigation works had seen no such thing for the past six months," he said.

"We already have story [(in officials)] learned from the P728-million fertilizer fund scam so now they make diversion projects and present these to the media," Mariano said.

The fertilizer fund scam refers to the alleged diversion of P329 million intended for fertilizer purchases for farmers nationwide but which funds supposedly ended up in the administration party's coffers during the 2004 election campaign period.

Suspended over forgery

THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION has suspended an official of the Light Rail Transit Authority for three months for submitting a forged medical certificate to justify a week's leave.

The LRTA had accused Jessie Sancon Sabinan, a division manager, of grave misconduct and falsification of official document, among other charges.

Sabinan had submitted a medical certificate supposedly signed by a Dr. Grace Mario Bilocon who subsequently testified under oath that she had not examined Sabinan and did not issue or sign a medical certificate for him.

But the CSC ruled that a government employee who submits a fake or forged medical certificate to justify sick leave was liable only for simple dishonesty.

The CSC said that while the prosecution had established that the medical certificate was indeed spurious and Sabinan had not been authorized to present any proof to the contrary, it was still not convinced that Sabinan had committed grave misconduct.

"The dishonest act ... did not cause damage or prejudice to the government and had no direct relation to or did not involve [his] duties and responsibilities ... The case is true with the liability to mitigate [sic] where the information falsified was not related to her employment, "the CSC said.

Sabinan was appointed officer-in-charge-CLTDN administrative department but when she was transferred to handle special projects, the Medical Center security sensed she' shall she tried to cover up with the false medical certificate.

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Radiation oncology at St. Luke's

THE DEPARTMENT OF RADIATION ONCOLOGY at St. Luke's Medical Center will conduct a postgraduate course with the theme, "Guiding the Upper Hand Using Cutting Edge Technology" on Sept. 15 in the second floor conference room of the main hospital building.

The multidisciplinary approach to the management of tumors of the lung, brain, prostate and nasopharynx, among others, will be discussed. All interested doctors are invited. Registration is free for the first 50 pre-registrants.

St. Luke's Department of Radiation Oncology has the most comprehensive array of radiation therapy equipment in the country and is the first to offer intensity modulated radiotherapy and high dose rate brachytherapy. It is also the only institution to offer respiratory gating.

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GMA on Apec summit: It's as good as it gets

SYDNEY—THEY CAME, THEY saw, and they drank a lot of Victoria bitter as state Pacific leaders wrapped up another summit yesterday, the question was whether their annual get-together produced very much.

Most participants and observers said the answer was, well, a little.

Prime Minister Howard, a former Philippine foreign secretary who now sits on a business advocacy group to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum, said it was normal for a summit to achieve less than what it had aimed at.

"Look at it as 21 people stopping on the same bus," he told reporters here. "Each one of them is dreaming his or her own dreams."

Still, analyst Charles Morrison said he had been "pleasantly surprised" by this year's event.

"I think there's not much in the way of ... a big extensive output, but the spirit was good," said Morrison, director of the Honolulu-based East-West Center on Asia-Pacific relations.

He said the advantage of a summit was not the sixty-plus—scored out at officials' level—but the chance to chew over concerns privately with other Apec leaders.

"There is a little bit of competition between the leaders of the big powers, competition for a sense that you are a vigorous world leader," he said.

Richard Bruneau, a lecturer Australian ambassador, was dismissive though, saying that on the contrary, "very little has been achieved."

He echoed the creation of environmental services and others that the climate—held sure enough as it contained no binding commitments and reaffirmed the United Nations as the main forum against global warming.

"This is a sideshow. It's not a breakthrough at all," he said.

The summit's home on climate change and security was not really what Apec was supposed to be about, he said, while US President George W. Bush had been on "mission control" by the war in Iraq that he had neglected Asia.

"What is Apec? Four adjectives in search of a noun," Bruneau said.

Much of the buildup to the weekend summit was taken up with the visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao, who had been in Australia since Monday, Bush—who arrived on Tuesday—and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

He oversaw a deal to import liquefied natural gas from Australia and Putin an accord with Australian Prime Minister John Howard allowing Moscow to buy uranium produced here, while Bush hailed the Australian leader for his continuing support in Iraq.

They helped make it a relatively successful summit for Howard, said Dennis Kingsbury a political analyst at Deakin University in Melbourne.

He thought the summit had been "relatively more positive" than other years because of Australia's commitment and for placing climate change top of the agenda.

"It is known like that which have given it probably greater relevance," Kingsbury said.

He said Apec's economic clout—the region produces 56 percent of global output—meant it had developed "a growing set of issues that is now news to find in other international forums."

However, with so many disparate political and economic systems, getting any agreement can be a challenge.

"In diplomacy you cannot be 100 percent successful. Sometimes are a product of negotiations," Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda commented after the climate change wrangling.

Philippine President Macapagal-Arroyo put it more succinctly: "It's as good as it gets," she said of the summit, "considering this is Apec."

AFP

Apec states push global trade talks to final phase

Front page A1

A successful global trade deal would "deliver new trade flows for the benefit of all, including developing countries," he said, adding that Apec members, which collectively account for half of global trade, have a major stake in helping to create a rules-based global trading system.

Curb global warming

Australian Prime Minister John Howard, whose meeting the US and conclusion of the summit, also highlighted steps announced by the leaders on Tuesday to curb global warming, which included ways mentioning goals on improving energy efficiency and increasing forest cover.

Unlike the UN-backed Kyoto Protocol, the "Sydney Declaration" on climate change does not set targets on the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming.

US President George W. Bush, Chinese President Hu Jintao, Russian President Vladimir Putin and other Apec leaders hope the climate change progress will influence coming global warming talks that critics have dismissed as too timid.

Supporters said the significance lay in getting the United States and China, two of the world's biggest polluters—to agree on common goals and in getting rich and developing nations to work together.

The Apec program may sway coming talks in Washington, New York and Indonesia on a new climate change blueprint to replace Kyoto, which expires in 2012.

Increasing forest cover

Under the platitudes, Apec members will initiate "energy partnership"—the amount of energy needed to produce a dollar of gross domestic product—25 percent by 2030.

They pledged to increase forest covers to the region by at least 20 million hectares by 2020.

Developing countries in Apec were not even happy about the Sydney Declaration.

Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare told fellow leaders he had reservations about signing the document, according to a statement issued by his office yesterday.

"Despite our efforts at this Apec meeting, no recognition is given to the initiatives pursued by the Coalition for Rainforests Nations on reducing carbon emissions from deforestation," said Somare, whose country is facing heavily logged and where some smaller islands are being flooded by rising sea levels.

He also said carbon trading mechanisms were not adequately addressed in the declaration.

The declaration was seen as a compromise between rich and poor Apec economies.

Health and population

Apec leaders also agreed to take various steps to ensure the health and safety of the region's population, including counterterrorism measures, Howard said.

The action was not aimed at China, which has been grappling with a series of product recalls in a number of economies, ranging from toys to toothpaste, Australia said.

The declaration was requested by Australia to "address its regional economic growth, including terrorism, natural disasters, food supply concentration and pandemics, such as bird flu.

A study in Singapore found the impact on Apec economies from a major terrorist attack would be $137 billion for the APF and $1099 billion in reduced trade.

Pacific-wide free trade

The Pacific Rim leaders also said yesterday they would continue to mandate a proposal to create a Pacific-wide free trade zone that would stretch from China to Chile and include all 21 Apec members, according to a final declaration released by the leaders.

The proposal, dubbed the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific and first floated three years ago, has gathered support from the United States and some other members, as well as among regional business leaders as a possible alternative to WTO talks.

"Sentiment is increasingly skeptical" about global trade talks, said Mark Johnson, chair of ACIL Tasman, a Melbourne economics and head of a business advisory council to Apec leaders.

But Apec members say the Pacific-wide trade zone proposal faces numerous hurdles and is only a long-term prospect. Reports from AP and Reuters

RP, China to review broadband project

Front page A1

In statements attended by Ms Arroyo, Commissioners Secretary Leandro Mendoza said ZTE vice president Yu Yong signed the $329-million NBN deal on April 21 in Boao, China, shortly before the Philippine leader and her entourage flew to the Philippines. The supply contract has been recommended.

Bribery

Asked about allegations that ZTE executives had bribed certain Philippine officials to clinch the deal, the secretary said Sunday, "I don't know much about it either."

Rep. Carlos Padilla has filed resolution dangan against Mendoza and other officials involved in the deal, and named Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr as the briber.

Abalos was reportedly given free trips to China and treatment by ZTE in lobby in its behalf.

Jose de Venecia III, a son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr, and spokesman of Investigate Holdings Inc., a proponent of the NBN project, has said Abalos tried to bribe him with $130 million to back out of the project.

Abalos has denied De Venecia's allegation.

Romulo Neri, former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, has neither confirmed nor denied that he was offered a P200-million bribe.

But reports said that when Neri, now chair of the Commission on Higher Education, informed Ms Arroyo about the bribery, she told him not to accept the money but approve the deal anyway.

The House of Representatives and the Senate are set to investigate the ZTE deal.

Asked if she had made a decision on the controversial contract, Ms Arroyo said "No, not yet."

"I have to discuss it with the Cabinet members who are in charge. We haven't discussed it yet. I'll await their recommendation," she said in an interview with reporters who covered her trip here for the Apec summit.

It was the first time Ms Arroya commented on the ZTE controversy in response to a question.

But she indicated she did not want to talk about the ZTE controversy and other political issues during a nearly two-hour ten-minutes flight

LEADERS and representatives of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation pose for a family photo on the final day of their summit. From row (from left): New Zealand's Prime Minister Helen Clark, Philippine President Macapagal-Arroyo, Russia's President Vladimir Putin and Thailand's Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont; back row (from left): Peru's President Alan Garcia, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Taiwan's economic leader representative Eiso Shih, and Vietnam's President Nguyen Minh Triet. REUTERS

that she had with reporters in her presidential suite at the Four Seasons hotel after the first day of the two-day Apec summit.

"Stick to Apec issues, please," she told the reporters, as she hugged at her neckline.

Ms Arroyo, accompanied by Bonpin Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo, had just come from a dinner and cultural presentation at the Sydney Opera House on the first evening of the two-day summit.

China-funded projects

In Manila, two senator close to the President said Ms Arroyo would meet with his Cabinet tomorrow to decide the fate of more than $2 billion worth of projects to be bankrolled and undertaken by Chinese firms, including the NBN.

The senators said Ms Arroyo had indicated to her Cabinet officials in Sydney that she would consider either "pearing an hold for further review or cancelling outright" the Chinese projects based on her advisers' recommendations.

Included in the review were projects whose contracts had already been signed—the ZTE deal, the North and Southrail projects, and the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) pipeline.

Cyber education project

Other projects with no contracts that would be reviewed by the review are the Lotlot farm water supply, Cyber Education Project, and major housing projects in the pipeline.

One of the senators said Ms Arroyo had decided to turn to Ian Caldwell for advice to unravel the mounting criticism against Chinese projects, specifically the ZTE contract.

Manobalayang Mayor Benhur Abalos, son of the Comelec chair, was part of the President's delegation to Sydney.

Ms Arroyo introduced the mayor and some members of the House of Representatives as leaders of the Filipino community sharing the convention of the Global Filipino Networking on Friday. With a report from Gil Cabunagan Jr.

Senate has been nemesis of both Estrada, GMA

Front page A1

The irony cannot be more sharply etched. As Impeda ends the agony of waiting for the judicial verdict on his case, Ms Arroyo is just beginning her own term encounter with political uncertainty.

The political fortunes of Ms Arroyo and Estrada have crossed and overlapped since 2001, when People Power II toppled him after he was abandoned by the Armed Forces.

The saga of the fall of Estrada and the rise of Ms Arroyo seems to have been intertwined in the tapestry of their mutually-castigator fates.

On Wednesday, Estrada will see the end of his misery over whether he will walk out of the hauntingdetention a free man, or continue the Ben Filipino penchant in history to be convicted of a crime.

As criminal and political history is written on that day, Ms Arroyo's legitimacy will remain on the line, heritage to the unpredictable proceedings of the revised Senate inquiry into the "Hello Garci" tapes.

Garci closure die

The Senate has been the nemesis of both Presidents since 2000, when Estrada faced an impeachment trial.

The prospects of the closure of the "Hello Garci" issue within the remaining three years of the Arroyo presidency appeared dim as the hearings in the Senate blue ribbon, defense and national security and electoral committees uncovered more issues.

The emergence of fresh issues has shadowed a promised senate investigation that is likely to haunt her presidency until 2010.

Nine twist

The Senate investigation developed a new twist on Friday when former USgt. Midi Doble, an ex-military intelligence agent who claimed to have tapped the telephone conversation between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, testified that a presidential assistant, Mely Feliciano, intervened in his transfer in June 2005 from the San Carlos Seminary in Mindoro City to Camp Aguinaldo.

Doble had taken refuge in the seminary with the former deputy director of the National Bureau of Investigation, Samuel Ong, who is a prosecution witness in the numerous cases of the wiretapped conversations between Ms Arroyo and Garcillano.

Poblador into the act

Doble had been expected to reveal the source of the "Hello Garci" tapes at a press conference at the seminary before he was whisked by Bishop Bishop Socrates Villegas to Camp Aguinaldo.

The Senate reopened the inquiry from the tapes after Gen. Rodolfo Lacson presented a video testimony of Doble that he was now ready to admit, after two years of silence, that he and a team of military intelligence technicians had tapped the conversations between Ms Arroyo and Garcillano.

Senators had decided in a caucus not to replay the tapes, fearing criminal liability for replaying an illegally obtained evidence.

But the hearings were sidetracked when Doble on Friday revealed that Poblador was involved in his removal from the seminary. How did Poblador get into the act?

Woman named 'Mody'

Doble identified that he saw in the official residence of then AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu "a woman" identified by his wife as "Mody, a secretary of President Arroyo." Doble said Mody had approached his wife and told her that if they had any problems they could come to her.

Lacson supplied the woman's full name as Remedios Poblador and identified her as a "confidante of President Arroyo." Senator Secretary Rodolfo Dano confirmed on Friday that Remedios Poblador is an undersecretary detailed with the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office in the House of Representatives.

Bishop's role

How the Church got involved in the transfer of Doble is included in the role of Bishop Villegas, who was invited to bar did not appear at the hearing. Villegas said he received on June 13, 2005, calls from priests at the seminary and "asked him for help."

He said he took Doble out of the seminary out of concern for the safety of the seminarians. He also said Poblador had asked him to help resolve "the ongoing crisis" in the seminary amid reports that the Army would raid the place in going out Doble and Ong.

Explaining the presence of Poblador in Camp Aguinaldo, where she met Bishop Villegas and Doble, Poblador Mely's was "asked to talk to Cardinal Sin, also Ulambrado because she's a relative of Cardinal Sin[illegible] and because she's a Palace official."

New Palace line

Pena said Doble "asked for the help of someone who can talk to the bishop, so that evidence would be avoided."

The Palace line, however, takes a new line to explain Mely's intervention. Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo said Malacañang did not order but to try to persuade Doble to leave the seminary. He said Poblador intervened "in her personal capacity" and "upon the behest of the Catholic Church and the military," both of which "obviously wanted Doble out of the seminary to end the standoff and to avert violence."

The purpose of Lacson is highlighting the intervention of Poblador appears evident in his claim that it brought the "Hello Garci" issue in the doorsteps of Malacañang.

A tall guy

The threat appears to lay the basis of a new impeachment complaint, paving to Pulong now, on top of the inquiry through its functionaries.

This recalls the attempts of the Richard Nixon White House to cover up the break-in of the Democratic Party offices in the Watergate apartments. The cover-up produced some articles of impeachment, which led to Nixon's resignation from the presidency.

Although Pena said Poblador would "on due time, issue statements on this matter," he was not clear whether Ms Arroyo would line him from testifying at the Senate under Executive Order No. 464, if she was summoned. The summons should not be ruled out.

Opposition senators have smelled blood. A chair is irresistible now BG did.

In the meantime, the Palace has found a full guy to a faceless functionary. The opposition has found a political strawman to lead.

Doc meted out year's suspension for error

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE CODE OF APpeals has upheld the Board of Medicine's decision meting out a one-year suspension on a doctor for gross negligence for allegedly misdiagnosing and operating on a 17-year-old boy with a brain clot.

In its ruling, the appellate court said there was sufficient basis to suspend Dr. Candido San Juan for medical negligence in the treatment of Richard Bejasa, who succumbed to a second stroke after undergoing surgery which the doctor had performed on him in 1997.

"Petitioner breached his duty as a physician when he made an incorrect diagnosis and operated on Richard," the court said in ruling 31 declares.

It said San Juan's actions led to Bejasa's death, and caused injury to his parents.

The appellate court also cited the findings of the Professional Regulation Commission's Board of Medicine that the conduct was unwarranting, and added that in administrative proceedings, there should only be reasonable ground in finding the person liable for gross negligence, even if the evidence was not overwhelming.

The doctor had Bejasa taken to the hospital immediately said X-rayed. He said Dr. Jose Jr. ordered him to do so the job after performing craniotomy, acts of freedom will get bill Philhealth benefits, a bill filed in Congress is proposing.

The Philhealth board approved on Aug. 24 Resolution No. 1109 which provides for continuing Philhealth coverage and benefits to dependents of the child, incapacitated and deceased members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, National Bureau of Investigation and other law enforcement agencies.

Rep. Arthur Celeste, chairs of the House committee on national defense and security and author of the bill, said it would give workers lifetime benefits and children coverage until the age of 21.

Taking care of heroes' families

THE WIDOWS AND children of soldiers, policemen and other person in uniform who are declared to die on the job after performing extraordinary acts of heroism will get full Philhealth benefits, a bill filed in Congress is proposing.

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China joins '10-B trees'

SPEAKER JOSE DE Venecia and Chinese Deputy Speaker Wu Bangguo agreed Friday to mobilize efforts to avert the planting of 10 billion trees in Southeast Asia as well as fighting climate change, one from desertification, drought, floods and acute encroachment.

At the same time, Jr. Venecia invited Jiang and Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Cao Gangchuan that the House of Representatives would likely approve President Macapagal-Arroyo's somewhat problematic covering the National Democratic Front, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army to end almost 40 years of violence and rebellion.

In a wide-ranging hour-long discussion between the Chinese and House members at the Manila Hotel, Jr. Venecia also proposed joint Chinese-Philippine exploration of the Spratly Islands region and hailed the military hotline between the US and China forged between President Arroyo and President Hu Jintao.

Jr. Venecia invited Jiang the Asian Parliamentary Assembly approved last month in Kuala Lumpur a proposed to plant 10 billion trees in the 10 Association of Southeast Asian nations.

In his part, Jiang told De Venecia China's environmental had deteriorated and was in need of large-scale tree-planting.

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'Tourism looking up'

THE BEST IS YET TO COME FOR Philippine tourism, according to Tourism Secretary Joseph "Joe" Durano.

Speaking last week at the Philippine Travel Exchange (Philtex), Durano said 2007 marked "the first time the Philippines would have more than three million tourists."

He also disclosed that some $4 billion worth of tourism projects were being developed nationwide to meet the expected demand for hotel rooms.

"Before, the problem was the lack of business. Today it's lack of rooms to accommodate the hotel business," he said.

Durano told a subsequent press conference the Philippines need to get only 200,000 foreign arrivals from China a year.

"For now, every month, we have more than 200,000 and that's good business all year round," he said.

Peace and order was never an issue, Durano said. "The issue is whether we have hotels or not—anyway."

Tourist arrivals of 1,126,509 from January to June augur a little more than three million visitors expected this year, Durano had earlier said.

The 18th Philippine Travel Mart, meanwhile, was held at SMEDgestall from Sept. 7 to 8.

"Everything's there for You" was the theme of the one-stop trade show that catered to tour and travel components like airlines, shipping and land transport, hotels, resorts and convention sites, marketers and promoters, said Jo Soriano, president of the Philippine Tour Operators Association which presents the PTM annually.

The PTM was co-presented by the Department of Tourism, the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp. and the Philippine Tourism Authority.

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OPINION

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Hot news

THE SYDNEY DECLARATION IS NOT A BREAKthrough. It is not a milestone in the long march to find what the joint statement called "an enduring global solution to climate change." But it is a step forward.

The statement by the leaders attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Sydney, Australia, declared their resolve to lower greenhouse gas emissions. "We are committed to the global objective of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere ... The world needs to slow, stop and then reverse the growth of global greenhouse gas emissions."

To be sure, the Sydney Apec leaders' Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Clean Development, to give it its complete name, speaks only of the need to work together to achieve a "long-term aspirational global emissions reduction goal," in preparation for "an effective post-2012 international arrangement." In other words, the conservative-driven APEC regional grouping did not call for binding commitments on the part of each member economy to lower greenhouse gas emissions. That makes the Sydney Declaration decidedly unlike the 10-year-old Kyoto Protocol, which binds its signatories to specific reduction targets. Commitments under that controversial agreement, which took effect in 2005, end in 2012.

The principal supporters of the Sydney initiative are Australia, this year's host of the annual summit, and the United States: staunch allies, robust business partners—and stubborn non-signatories to the Kyoto Protocol.

Essentially, what the Sydney Declaration does for the two economies is to give them the breathing room they need to flex the necessary political muscle at home. By cutting a high profile in their support for this new APEC initiative to counter global warming (the declaration was issued a day before the end of the summit, to coincide with US President George W. Bush's scheduled weekend speech), both Australia and the United States can say they are doing something on the climate change front, without actually committing to specific emission reduction targets until at least 2012.

But consensus diplomacy being what it is, the Sydney Declaration also offers something for developing economies, especially China. The very concept of a long-term goal meets Chinese (as well as Canadian) preferences.

While the language of diversity is canny—"The future international climate change arrangement needs to reflect differences in economic and social conditions among economies and be consistent with our common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities"—can be said to favor both developed and developing economies, the latter found the statement's unequivocal commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to their advantage.

"That's fine," President Macapagal-Arroyo told reporters the night the statement was released, "because at least they all recognized that the UN is the real forum for decision-making."

"The important thing is not to undermine the UN," she added.

As we said, a little something for everyone. But because consensus groupings like APEC and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations operate on the fundamental principle of precedence, the Sydney Declaration can be considered a real step forward. Even without formal formulas about binding goals, the joint statement already contains all APEC members to the potential role of emission reduction targets for both developed and developing economies by the next decade.

The collective decision to pursue "an effective post-2012 international arrangement," therefore, can be understood to mean some progress forward.

Politicos' transparency

POLITICIANS TODAY HAVE JUMPED OUT OF THE CLOSET, to the "good old days." They seem fundamentally change their stubborn mind-set. They used to grasp that no matter how often they may lie politically, they do not deserve to remain in politics if they lack transparency in their monetary dealings and cannot show adequate explanations for the sudden changes in their behavior. They should refer it upon themselves to voice and endorse laws that require thorough disclosure of the sources and reputable uses of political funds.

FOREIGN COMMENT

Good politicians become fully capable of shedding by a basic code of ethical conduct, the cynicism of their predecessors' times: Be wrapped, not left this or basic administrations be able to make the most of the public, which they need as never.

—Rachel Khedoori Thakyal

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Meralco replies on power industry issues

HELGE S. LYRS QUICK REPLY PAGE/BUSINESS and the business record in the previous two columns on the "horror of cross-ownership" in the power industry, the principal cause of high power rates. The figure is due to be reconciled and reconfigure cross-ownership (whichever is the appropriate word) but the damage has been done to allow Meralco to own generating plants is one of the proposed amendments. Meralco is opposing the change to the figure because, we cannot believe, the law as passed gives a monopolistic advantage.

In fairness to Meralco and for the readers to understand the issues better, we are printing here in full:

"The bilateral contracts between Meralco and several power companies, including Independent Power Producers (IPPs) are not "cross-ownership deals." These contracts were the products of extensive negotiations between Meralco and its counterparties, and actually resulted in lower generation charges for Meralco customers. Moreover, the Meralco contracts with Pinlo Gas project were initiated in response to a call or invitation from the Department of Energy ...

"The power purchase agreements resulting from the subject IPP contracts is shown in the fact that for the year 2006 billing, National Power Corp's (NPC) generation cost of 35.07 DPK is significantly higher than Meralco's contracted power rates ranging from 3.5 to 4.5 centavos per kilowatt-hour which some as follows: Pinlo Gas Power (Sta. Rita, Batangas) 34.17 DPK, and BGP Gen (Ilijan, Batangas) 35.70 DPK.

"Moreover, the volume contracted by Meralco with its IPPs as compared to total electricity sales from 2000 thru contracted by NPC and its cost is 85%.

"It must be stressed at this point that ERC Resolution No. 11, Series 2005, effectively requires ERC's Distribution Utilities to bid out their power supply requirements.

"The Lopez Group does not control the power sector's generation sector, whether directly or through the holding company for its power gen-

Amad M. Cruz

eration businesses, First Gen, Energy, Visayan Electric Co. and the business record in the previous two columns on the "horror of cross-ownership" in the power industry, the principal cause of high power rates. The figure is due to be reconciled and reconfigure cross-ownership (whichever is the appropriate word) but the damage has been done to allow Meralco to own generating plants is one of the proposed amendments. Meralco is opposing the change to the figure because, we cannot believe, the law as passed gives a monopolistic advantage.

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"The Lopez Group does not control the power sector's generation sector, whether directly or through the holding company for its power gen-

eration businesses, First Gen, Energy, Visayan Electric Co. and Meralco are independent power generation companies in the Philippines, in total installed capacity of 1,839 MW accounts for a mere 12 percent of the country's total installed capacity. In a manner of fact, it only counts third, after numerous small players "BAP Energy plus consortium composed of Tokyo Electric and Mitsubishi that bought Masinloc Philippine assets) and SEPCO.

"What First Gen was able to win the 112-MW Pantabangan-Masiway Hydroelectric Complex is by participating in a series of competitive auctions being conducted by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) to privatize NPC's generation assets, it must be emphasized that the Pantabangan-Masiway hydro actually was by other private investors, such as Mirant Group, which won the 360-MW Magat Hydroelectric Power Plant in Isabela, and the 600-MW Sual Coal-Fired Power Plant in Pangasinan.

"The Lopez, also all, regularly provides electric company or owned group can own, operate or control more than 30 percent of the installed generating capacity of a grid and no 25 percent of the national installed generating capacity of a grid.

For 2006, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) has set the subject generating capacity limit at the following levels: Luzon, 11,703 MW; Visayas, 1,800 MW; Mindanao, 1,600 MW. Systemwide, 15,216 MW.

"The foregoing limitations, however, are not based on the ERC which in this day continues to control more than 60 percent of the country's power supply, apparently through its power regulatory role. ERC continues to approve rate increases for Meralco and other distribution utilities, even as competition is not allowed. There will be no real competition as intended by the law and therefore no reduction in generation rates.

"Because of the gun holdings by Lopez and Meralco can only be attributed to the fact that the plans were hidden not to exercise power, i.e. without any supply contract. Such hoarded the generating power incentives to potential customers. The issuance of the Lopez law sent well aware of such possibilities, which is precisely the reason the law mandated that DUs and NG come into competitive supply contracts (TSCs) that will be attached to the NPC assets up for privatization, in order to create incentives for prospective investors. Meralco already entered into a TSC with NPC. That alone would have secured the success of the privatization program. SEC, however, continues to subsequently treat Meralco as a PSALM affiliate in order to restrict their rights to not NPC assets being sold. It has become clearly obvious that NPC is sabotaging the government's privatization program. This is not surprising considering that many in government have many stake into the country's power industry dependent on NPC assets purchases from its private utility pals. The P600-billion winning bid came in a whisker above the reserve price of P595 billion and topped bid of P570 million offered by Hon Hai-owned of the globally accepted standard of $1 million per megawatt.

"Thus, it is no great wonder why most that are owned by the Lopezes of late, only a mere 20 percent of NPC's power generation, even have been sold, and not a single IPP contract has been awarded to private IPP administrators."

Double-edged

THERE'S THE RUB

Gemmalo de Quiros

IT WAS MORE THAN A SHELLING OF DEJA VU: it was the sensation of being thrust right back into Estrada impeachment trial seven years ago. That was the Senate hearing on Vidal Dobbs's monstrous last week.

What gave it a sense of history repeating itself was the spectacle of the Queen's head, and legal (or legally minded) editors mounting a full-scale attack on Dobbs's testimony. In the many he questioning his capacity to tell the truth, several of those marvelously piercing words, "I put it to you, sir, my name, which means "deceit," I point it's legally wrong. But people named Dick and Dobbs should really not prevaricate back.

That was how it was seven years ago. Instead of my remarking himself with a full dress rehearsal, in three prior cases, led by no less than ex-Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, mocking the majority of the law to pass on obstacle after obstacle in the path of knowing on Estrada's involvement in Jose Velarde. Marcos's favorite lawyer, fired the first broadside by depicting Chavit Singson as an utter blackguard, which he probably is, to which Johns Arroyo replied magnificently that legislative cases were no this a court so to hide the humongous crime of the trial of public trust. What a difference can or ten years make!

A Senate hearing of course is not an impeachment trial, but in this case it might as well be so. It is in favor to in the public mind. Indeed, it was that hearing that led to its ouster, a more than makes up for in verdict courts.

The farce in the impeachment trial were more blunted, the proof of Estrada's wrongdoing more vague. Compared to Dobbs, Singson was far more sympathetic, the belonging to the den of thieves not nestled Dobbs's midst. It made him easy to be both a prosecutor in the haters and one who could not be trusted. And off the prosecutors had to go (he was his word).

Dobbs has no such problem. Many questions for him are "Dobbs's Gate" ones. That may not be playing in the halls of the Senate, but it is playing

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The Argentinean amparo

IN MY COLUMN LAST WEEK I WROTE ABOUT the birth of recursos de amparo and its development in Mexico. In Mexico it is used as a remedy against acts by any authority that violate any of the individual guarantees recognized by the Constitution, whether the motive be criminal, civil or administrative.

From Mexico amparo rapidly spread through Latin America. It is now found in one form or another in Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru. It is now also the mandado de seguridad of Brazil and the amparo in Argentina. In all of this, however, the all-purpose scope of the Mexican amparo has not been copied. Rather, the institution have generally limited themselves to amparo as a remedy specifically aimed at protecting violations of fundamental liberties. From the little reading I have made on the subject, I find the Argentinean development particularly interesting and perhaps of some relevance for us.

Up until the middle of the twentieth century the only federal relief for violations of governmental rights was habeas corpus, an action seeking the restoration of unconstitutionality and the cure of habeas corpus. Thus people deprived of rights other than physical liberty must seek relief through "ordinary" civil or administrative and judicial proceedings, which was tedious, expensive and frequently ineffective.

What seems to have caused a response in Argentina was a freedom of the press case combined with a right to writs case. A lower court found that a constitutional right had been violated but the court could not give habeas corpus relief because physical liberty was not involved. In reversing the lower court decision, the Supreme Court found that in the absence of a specific law granting redress, redress was available from the Constitution itself. The Court argued: "Individual guarantees exist and protect individuals by their simple enactment in the Constitution and 'independently of any regulatory measures.... Declarations, rights and guarantees set out, in some way by habeas corpus, many thousand times, have not been enough to guarantee the institutional supremacy of the statutes jointly demand the full importance and exercise of individual guarantees by an effective virgin of the rule of law, and impose upon the country's judges the duty of ensuring them." Another decision even expanded the scope of recursos to cover infringements of individual rights by private individuals.

Thereafter statutory developments followed which specified the acts which could be remedied by amparo, the procedural considerations and the judgment that could be rendered.

The acts included were: private acts of public authority that amparo was made inapplicable to acts of the judiciary and officials acts related to national defense. Amparo would not lie either where it could lead to a judgment that would "directly or indirectly compromise the regularity, continuity and efficacy of performance of scientific services, or in the development of scientific researches on the same." Moreover, the illegitimacy, illegality, or arbitrariness of the impugned act must be clear and undisputable without any need for an extensive legal or factual debate. In other words, the applicant's right to obtain an amparo must be manifest and unconstroversible.

Sometime later the federal legislature adopted another statute governing amparo against acts of private individuals.

Procedurally amparo was seen as essentially cumulative. Thus administrative remedies must first be exhausted and where ordinary judicial remedy was available it must first be used, that the proceeding, like habeas corpus, would be summary.

Prior to judgment one follows? Mainly it would be rescission or injunction. The judgment could not terminate with a grant of monetary redress or with a penal sanction except perhaps as punishment for contempt. A declaration of unconstitutionality could also be made, but the judgment, like those of our lower courts, would not constitute stare decisis and would only bind the parties.

I suspect that the amparo remedy being contemplated by our Supreme Court will come out in form and subsequent analogous to that of Argentina and that of Mexico. It will be limited to cases, thus:

1. Violations of constitutional rights in the strictest sense of the word, that is, violations of rights without statutory support? I suppose that the answer to that question will depend on how our Supreme Court reads the scope of the relevant constitutional provisions. Our Constitution mandates the Supreme Court to "promulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights." Is this a delegation to the Court of whatever powers is necessary to protect and enforce constitutional rights? During the deliberations of the 1986 Constitution Commission, former Chief Justice Roberto Concepcion and Commissioner Jose Luis Jesus Aquino Abad discussed that the addition of this provision was meant to emphasize the fact that constitutional rights are not merely declaratory but are meant to be enforced. I read this as a signal to the Court to do whatever is necessary.

2. Violations of rights other than physical liberty? Will the Court allow the use of amparo to protect property rights, for example? Will it allow the use of amparo to protect rights under contracts? Will it allow the use of amparo to protect rights under statutes?

3. Violations by private individuals? Will the Court allow the use of amparo to protect rights against violations by private individuals?

4. Violations by public officials? Will the Court allow the use of amparo to protect rights against violations by public officials?

5. Violations by public officials in the exercise of their official duties? Will the Court allow the use of amparo to protect rights against violations by public officials in the exercise of their official duties?

6. Violations by public officials in the exercise of their official duties where the violation is clear and undisputable without any need for an extensive legal or factual debate. In other words, the applicant's right to obtain an amparo must be manifest and uncontrovertible.

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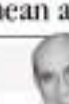
SOUNDING BOARD



Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

A commanding officer stays with his troops

LAST YEAR, IN MARKING THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF our graduation from the Philippine Military Academy, Gentle stage was shared with the class of 2006, the 324-strong batch to join the largest number of cadet graduates. It was as though we were watching our own sons and daughters marching in formation, ready to assume their places in the long grey line that runs relentless from one end of the parade ground to the other, practically renewing

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

In the history of the 1960s, perhaps no class has suffered as many casualties in so short a period of time. Barely a year after graduation, one-third of its members would fall to enemy fire. A fifth—the President had fallen assassin for graduating at the head of the class—would fight a losing battle against disease. In the end, PMF 11, from Toledo of his, Dominguez, Bocos fine, would not be able to survive the onslaughts of an enemy that has long been the scourge of mankind. A newspaper clipping I had the honor of identified him as "the first Bicolano to become the valedictorian at the PMA." To be but there were others from the region who graduated at the head of their classes several years before Toledo, to our batch, the Class of 1966, Jose C. Bello of Camalig, Albay, has finished as the class valedictorian. Nevertheless, we too join his fellow Bicolanos in memorizing the fate of a young man whose life held so much promise not only for his family but also for the nation.

On a personal note, the Manduia Class of 2006 has a special place in my heart. In 2003, Maj. Gen. Melchor Tiongco, now an interior undersecretary, was the superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy. He invited me to address the corps of cadets after a parade and review. At that time, the Class of 2006 made up the plebe component of the corps. In June 2003, Lt. Gen. Cristolito Baloning, the PMA superintendent, would also invite me as the guest of honor during Recognition Day even as Iner Del Pilar. This time the Class of 2006 provided the officer-in-command, the brigade of cadets.

I wish to thank General Tiongco and General Baloning for their kind and generous invitation for me to speak before the cadets and to partake of the same simple meal that I used to have many years ago, surrounded by the young men who will some day lead our Armed Forces. My special thanks also goes to Lieut. Gen. Juanito Ochoa, Jr., the PMA's 39th superintendent as announced in my visit to the academy in 2005. General Ochoa is now a special envoy to the British, Indonesian, Malaysia, Philippines-East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA). In the case of General Baloning, I am informed that he has been in the best of health during the past few months. I wish him a safe and speedy recovery.

* * *

One of the finest books on the Battle of Iwo Jima is a recent account written by Hamilo Kakehashi and published by Presidio Press, "He Said to Hell in Battle." It is the story of the encounter between US Marines and Japanese army and navy units as seen through the eyes of the Japanese commander, Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, one of the lesser-known war figures of the Pacific War but one who was highly regarded by his adversaries.

* * *

Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi was the product of a middle school in Nagano. He went to the military academy and later attended the Army War College. In 1928, at a 36-year old cavalry captain, he was sent to study in the United States. This was a special privilege for so-called "select squad" officers who had graduated from the War College. They were to instill become duly were personally presented with a silver tray the Emperor. Most of them would go to countries like Germany, Russia, Great Britain and the United States, with Germany being the most popular destination.

Kuribayashi chose to study in the United States and was assigned to the US Fifth Cavalry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. He also found time to audit courses at Harvard and at the University of Michigan, and there himself across the continent. On the developing war in Europe, he visited the battlefields of America, based on these first hand observations. In 1933, he moved to Canada where he served as the military attaché.

* * *

Iwo Jima has an area of only 21 square kilometers, but it had three airfields and was described as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier." It was located 1,130 kilometers from Japan proper and given command of all forces in the Iwo Jima immediately upon arrival, he proceeded to inspect every inch of the island on foot, starting with Mt. Suribachi, the highest point in the area.

The biggest problem he faced was how to get drinking water. There were no streams, no springs. The only source of drinking water was rainwater and the best he could do was to store. He prohibited the wasteful use of water and was especially strict with senior officers. He was also concerned about what the soldiers ate. He forbade preparing food for officers separate from that of the ordinary soldier. He himself would follow this rule, making sure that he experienced all the discomforts of his troops.

Kuribayashi was a genius. So "combat science" station was established on Iwo Jima and the reputation of all women and children was completed were unsinkable before the American assault.

When Kuribayashi took command of Iwo Jima, it was believed that like other commanders, he would evacuate civilians from Chichi Jima, a nearby island, a safe place with abundant water and food. Instead, he stayed on Iwo Jima and did not leave the island until his death. It was only later during the battle that the Americans realized that the Japanese commander actually directing operations against them was on the island.

The Battle of Iwo Jima, the defense of a Japanese unit, it was commander for the commanding officer to remain here his behind the line. This was not the case with Kuribayashi. He himself led the attack—not a banzai charge but a plan aimed at creating maximum confusion and destruction, a training document from the Self-Defense Force officers' school reads. "There is no other example in the history of the Japanese army where a officer-in-command led the charge himself."

Kuribayashi was wounded in the right thigh and is believed to have died either from loss of blood or from his own hand. No one survived who witnessed the last moments of this commander who fought side by side with his men until his own death.

THEY SAID

Ingrate

"I think my work out for him when he was being prosecuted in the Senate impeachment. I would have like a real brother, a kid brother. He knows that I worked to control that committee. If I were him, I would have defended it."

—Sen. Rodolfo Biazon on Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's apparent reluctance to help with the Senate defense

All quiet on the southern front

AHEAD FROM THE JOLO FLEET OF A NOCTURnal spy plane days ago, and a few negligible exchanges of fire, nothing much of late has disturbed the uneasy peace in the troubled area of Mindanao.

But Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga, who visited the troops in Jolo last week, announced in a television interview that there would be no let-up in the operations against the Abu Sayyaf and other bandit elements. He also said that while they respect religious and cultural traditions, such operations will continue even during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan which begins on Sept. 12.

Nonetheless he gave the assurance that they would not be targeting communities or civilians, only specific "personalities" and groups, a.k.a. "terrorists."

"Kami ay mag-iingat sa...," he emphasized.

Allaga sounded sincere enough in his dialogue with a group of civilians, but in most of us, his assurances don't offer even mild comfort.

How are such military operations, offensives, sorties, etc. could be so pinpointed and so conducted that they would play up according to plan or better still, that fate would complete so we can "mobilize reserve to our heart's desire."

I have lost my copy of Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace" but if I recall correctly one good battle was triggered by a mistaken shot at a snake. It doesn't take much for a spark to "ignite" explosive and specific "personalities" to explode into a full blown "war."

More than anyone else in his area of responsibility—General Ribadeneira, Tumbagan Brigade, Basilan, Jolo and Tawi-Tawi, a geographical configuration of which I unfortunately Muslim or "Moro"—Allaga knows this.

The point is, why the hurry? Why the urgency? Why is it so crucial to launch this operation or offensive or whatever at this time? Why can't it wait or be deferred until after the month of fasting?

Allaga's statement that he has consulted with the Ulamas in the area and that Christian soldiers wearing all over their fronts and orchards can

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Norsaffyn Mustafa

using other Tausugs who also have to bat but whom the "Christian" government has rigged to "terrorists," is satisfied.

This may suffice some as an irrational statement but there are times when there is but a thin line between irrationality and reality. Any cultural stereotyping of a people, any generalization or indoctrination of one culture have different realities.

The bigger and more unwelcome picture here, over is that this perceived cultural and religious insensitivity on the part of the government and the armed forces in particular underlies the fear, less frustration that the AFP will never win the war in Jolo and other Muslim provinces, whether it is against the MILF, MILF, the Abu Sayyaf, or even the Jemaah Islamiyah.

It will take more than words to convince the people that the "ideal" forces of the government are executing their lands, killing their sons and daughters, destroying their crops and schools, to ensure their good health and well-being.

And for as long as the people are on their side, the Abu Sayyaf can always metamorphose from being "terrorists" to more docile bandits to just the time it takes to hide their Armalite rifles and change their clothes. Only they know who they don't even have to go home to do that. Any road-side store or bar is always willing to have their guns and head them a shelf, as long as it fits.

The ceasefires programs to "win hearts and minds" conducted by the civil-relations agency of the Armed Forces with every change of command by any administration through four decades have done almost nothing to diminish the number of available recruits and leaders even ready and will-

Save the titling system

YOU MAY RECALL THAT ON FEB. 20, 2006, I wrote about a legal fight ("The value of a title"), just one of many cases in Cebu-one where land grabbing threatens to seriously undermine the credibility of the land titling system in our country. Property owners who acquired their properties in good faith, developed them, paid taxes on them, suddenly faced a claim by a lawyer that he, or her, owned their properties.

That lawyer, Atty. Dennis Dimson, claimed ownership of a very large property on the basis of a land title of doubtful authenticity but which, he claimed, predated the land titles held by original owners. Much of the subsequent titles of the property owners were based. This one claim affected dozens of properties. Despite evidence to invalidate that claim, Dimson's case kept wending in the courts. Property owners doggedly fought the spurious claim. One such group is composed of the farmers beneficiaries of agricultural, financial, facility, Inc., Mrs. Nilda Kapit Sabay Association, Inc. and 122 Realty Corp.

The legal fight between the group I mentioned above, and the person claiming their land, has revealed some interesting details since I last wrote about it.

The lawyers of the claimant, Dimson, besides admitting he'd never actually possessed the lands he claimed, said he had never paid taxes on them either (which is a way of asserting responsible ownership). What's more, Dimson's own lawyer admitted that he had never paid taxes on the lands. So how could he have obtained ownership of the properties he said he owned by way of taxpayer law?

Not to mention the impossibility of Dimson's claims as to the person who transferred the land to him. Dimson claimed it was Antonio Sachez who sold title to the land as attorney-in-fact for a certain Dolores Abreu. Abreu alleged in court that her attorney-in-fact title to or lack of Ms. Concepcion Vidal. The source, in the case of Republic v. Alba Avella and Ana Sachez, held that "Celina, is physically and legally impossible for him [Sachez] or Abreu] to

be the grandson of Maria de la Concepcion Vidal." The Land Registration Commission, in a report dated 29 August 3, 1981, pointed out that "J.P. Rizal, the Abreu's were 60 years old in 1960 or thereabouts, he was born on or before 1898. If Maria de la Concepcion Vidal was 9 years old on or before December 3, 1912, she was born on or before 1903. Could a grandson be older than his grandmother?"

Not to mention the fact that Dimson's claim on a title that, he claimed, predated the title of the Bureau of Agriculture, Financial Realty, Inc., Mrs. Nilda Kapit Sabay Association, Inc. and 122 Realty Corp.

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THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

'Collect & dump' a disaster

LETTERS

ALMAZ, CAPORAL III, A. HALOR, HEAD-ache for politicians and citizens of Metro Manila.

Local leaders, led by Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos who is also the president of the Metro Manila Mayors' League, are in crisis following the decision of the local government of Rodriguez (formerly Montalban) to shutter the garbage collectors (Sir. Both agree) from the waste dropped facility currently used by the 17 cities of Metro Manila.

In a knee-jerk reaction, Abalos is urging the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority to find a new dumping ground within six months. Hernandez, other local leaders are begging Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuenca to postpone the implementation to two months to give local government units to adjust their budgets.

The leaders naturally see the people's misery while most of us, the taxpayers, are forced to work in dirty-smart urban society—a tragedy of history since its start as Indio community, children and old people alike literally eating alongside garbage.

We are again spending millions of public funds just to clean up clogged waterways or put local governments that are willing to become the dumping ground of our garbage, smothering the health of communities in the process.

Bad governance and lack of awareness are a recipe for disaster.

Just last Sep. 15, a portion of the Payatas dump collapsed again. Luckily, there were no human casualties this time. However, this dump witness 45 million tons of leachate per year, thus contaminating the groundwater of Quezon City.

The Ecological Solid Waste Management Act has already provided local governments units with a comprehensive framework on how to properly address solid waste and pollution.

Some communities in Metro Manila are segregating their waste but the trucks continue to collect and dump everything together as one like chaos in Payatas and Rodriguez, which should have already been closed since 2006. Segregating waste at source and composting biodegradable waste will lessen emission of methane gas and help mitigate global warming.

There must be a way to segregate recyclable materials to zero waste at least cost-effective and sustainable. It will cost, power citizens to be conscious of their environment and it makes sure that our transport public funds are not squandered on costly waste disposal systems that put our health and environment at risk.

The "collect and dump" waste management system only makes corrupt individuals and politicians richer at our expense.

—ELLA ARAGALAN,
coordinator, Kapihan Confidential,
Unit 1111, Eagle Court Condominium,
24 Matalino St., Quezon City

Wanted: transparent, reasonable power fees

THIS CONCERNS THE LATEST REPORT of Meralco to the Automatic Generation Rate Adjustment (AGR) mechanism.

In the July billing component of Meralco, a base paragraph update on AGR was highlighted with the announcement that the generation charge to be paid by the consumers for the month of July was P6.4554/kWh. To alleviate the impact of the news, Meralco elevates had to deliberately omit any reference to the fact that the figure was original). P4.42/kWh is of August 2014. Worse, within a period of one year, the generation charge increased by P1.26/kWh.

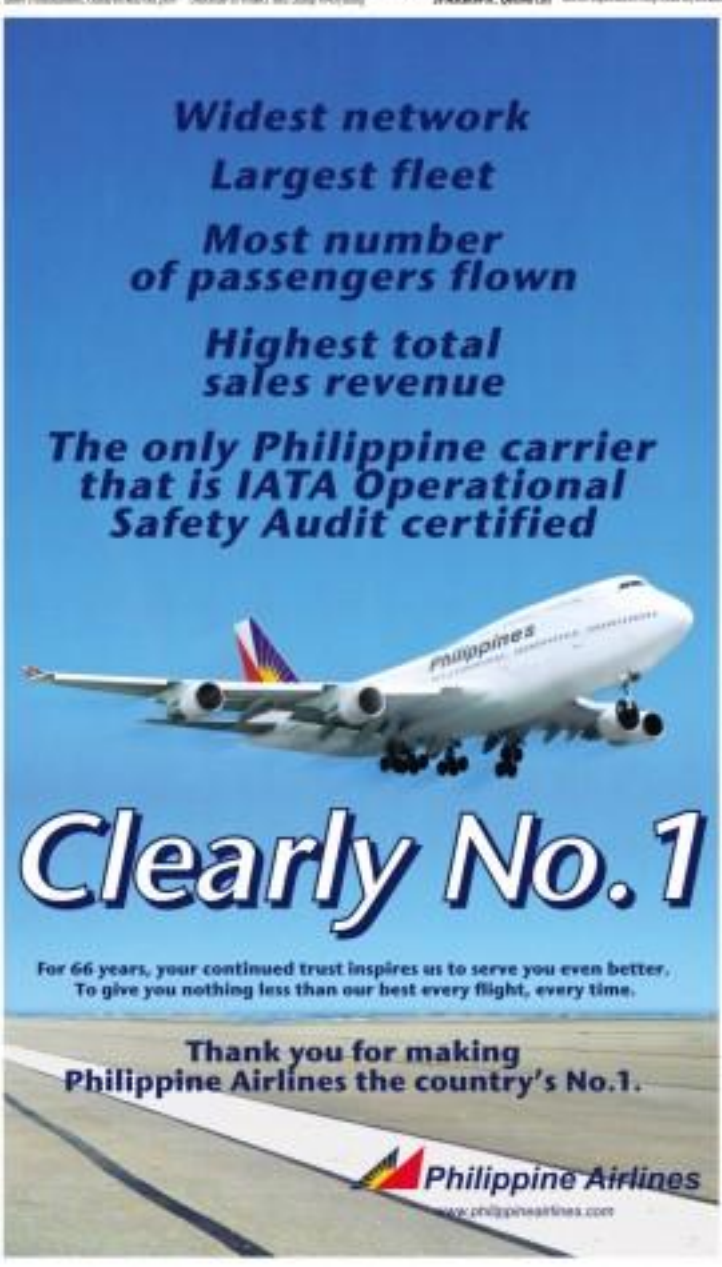
Regardless of public opinion on the unpopular Power Purchase Agreements (PPA), the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira) still designated the generation sector. Hence, for lack of authority on the part of the Energy Regulatory Commission to compel the plants listed by the independent power producers (IPPs) of Meralco, the generation charge is likewise to its customers cannot be implemented to duplicate.

The recent approval of the amendment to the implementing rules of Epira makes matters worse. Here, the amendment shortened the necessity of publication before any adjustment in the generation charges only for month. "Necessitate" is the word used in Epira, and it does imply a reduction of the right of the consumers to be informed.

The chairman of Meralco is already bleeding financially because of the upward trend in the generation rates. With this development on "automatic" adjustments, the ordinary paying consumers will bleed more. Worse, it will be over-the-head as it is now impossible for them to react. They will be charged on their right to be informed on the nature of how adjustments has been taken away.

Enough of euphemisms. What we need is an urgent and genuine reform in the power industry. The consumers deserve transparent and reasonable prices of electricity.

—RAMIRO LIMON-FONTE,
ramlimon@yahoo.com



Farmers, fisherfolk are Landbank's top clients

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO THE LETTER, TITLED "Carping about CARP," of Stephen L. Hontanosas (Inquirer, 8/24/15). Please allow us to clarify two erroneous points raised in the letter.

First, Hontanosas alleged that "farmers, or rather Landbank, are all deadbeats."

On the contrary, Landbank has classified the farmers and the fisherfolk as its accredited clients and key development partners in promoting economic growth in the countryside. Landbank thus commences its support on clean and robust priority sectors, namely: microenterprises and SMEs, livelihood, agribusiness, tech, agri-infrastructure, agri-related and environment-related projects.

Despite more economical banks shy away from lending to farmers and fisherfolk, both of which are considered high-risk, Landbank finds it rewarding credit to clients. As of August this year, Landbank's total loans to its priority sectors reached P76.1 billion, representing 70 percent of the bank's total loan portfolio of P112.7 billion. Of this amount, the commercial loans to its accredited clients—small farmers and fisherfolk—reached P15.2 billion, covered through 809 accredited cooperatives/ associations and 11,000 individual farmers.

For the first half of 2015, Landbank released P9.2 billion, benefiting more than 171,000 small farmers and fisherfolk nationwide. These loans bankrolled such economic activities as crop production, livestock and poultry raising, agri-industrial processing and the like.

Two, Hontanosas said that Landbank doesn't even "market right-sized to urban clients."

Among the country's commercial banks, Landbank holds the dimension of being present in all 81 provinces of the country. It is present in far-flung areas such as Batanes, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Davao. Landbank has also more extensive network spanning across the nation—with 323 branches and extension offices. Its presence in the countryside is primarily to service the banking requirements of the rural communities, particularly the farmers and fisherfolk, the SMEs and micro-enterprises. The local government units and other key sectors that Land Bank considers as development partners.

—JOCELYN E. S. SPILDO,
assistant vice president,
Corporate Affairs Department,
Land Bank of the Philippines, Makati, Manila

Torture charges untrue

RE "WE CONSENT ON TORTURE (ML, Inquirer, 8/24/15), which is titled "Mexico was host to at least nine aliens in the Americ" (Inquirer, 7/31/15).

The alleged torture of a certain "Victor" by soldiers of the 69th Infantry Battalion is not true. He was never tortured nor forced to report to the 69th IB. He has actually signed a certification that he was released unharmed on the same day. Furthermore, the five operations mentioned in the article never showed up to make a statement, but they were later identified by the villagers to commit an extortion.

The troops of the 69th IB and 24th IB operating in the areas of Pampanga were actively conducting peace forces, the acts of violence allegedly committed by them are all false charges purposely designed to discredit the military in the area. It is clear that Kapapanan is spreading the propaganda against the military to create a negative image of these units.

The 69th IB welcomes an investigation regarding the matter. A formal complaint has yet to be filed in court, but this matter has already been brought down to the attention of the media, which is not the proper forum for resolving the case.

—BGA. FERNANDO B. LUCIANO,
chief, 7th IB (MAKO) Regional Division,
Philippine Army,
Fort Ramon Magsaysay, Palayan City

Hail the Pinoy pugilists!

I AM SO PROUD OF THE FILIPINO BOXERS who are making a name for themselves and bringing great honor to the Philippines.

When I was a college student, he (who used to wonder why Filipinos would spend so much time and effort in basketball when we did not have even a remote chance to be a world power in that sport. We kept repeating that the boxing ring should be the place that the Philippines should focus on.

It he were just alive today, he would be so happy and proud. Three cheers to the Filipino fighters!

—JOSE CUEPEL,
dcuepel@pchrd.dost.gov.ph

Reds in exile fear for comrades in RP after police raid

By Jerome Aning, and Delfin Mallari
Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC front of the Philippines has asked a Netherlands court not to allow the return to Philippine authorities of documents seized in connection with the arrest of communist leader Jose Ma. Sison last month because it would endanger the lives of many people.

In a statement released Saturday, NDF International Information Office executive director Rafli de Leon said that simultaneous with the arrest of Sison on Aug. 27 in Utrecht, the Netherlands, the Dutch police raided seven homes of members of the group. They seized computers, flash memory drives, digital cameras and other items that contained information about people who had been in touch with the NDFP, the political wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines whose leaders are on self-imposed exile in the Netherlands.

"The lives of these persons will directly be put in danger if these information matters (sic) are given over to Philippine authorities or to foreign intelligence services such as the United States' Central Intelligence Agency," NDFP lawyer Rietland Tonkelaar had said in a letter earlier this month to Judge Commissioner I.B. van Zuthhemmel of the court in The Hague that is handling the case against Sison.

De Leon said Tonkelaar reminded Van Zuthhemmel that "hundreds of persons have been murdered, some in a brutal manner, since President Arroyo took power in 2001, among them journalists, judges and lawyers, a bishop, priests, students and teachers, and human rights activists."

"It is not unthinkable that Netherlands authorities will be responsible for new murders, if the information will be traded," Tonkelaar added.

Tonkelaar asked the Judge Commissioner for the immediate return of the articles taken during the Sison searches, stressing that other members of the NDFP to whom the seized articles belonged were not suspects in the case against Sison.

Sison, 68, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, was arrested in connection with the murders in the Philippines of former communist rebel leaders Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara in 2003 and 2006, respectively.

Abalos impeachment eyed

FREEDOM TO GO SUGAR-FREE!

Bacchus
SUGAR FREE

Pure Energy Without The Sugar.

Erap sees 102-yr-old mother in hospital bed

From page A1

meeting between deposed President Joseph Estrada and the ailing 102-year-old Mary Ejercito at her bedside in an isolation room at the San Juan Medical Center.

On Wednesday, the Sandiganbayan Special Division will hand down its verdict in the 67-year-old trial of Estrada, accused of illegally amassing P4 billion from gambling payoffs and tobacco tax kickbacks, and of falsely declaring his assets.

Opposition leaders said they expected Estrada's supporters in key concentrations in metro-cide with the verdict. The police are mobilizing about 6,000 troops around the courthouse and at Malacañang.

Connected to life-sustaining machines, Estrada's frail mother managed to greet her son with a "very faint" gaze to acknowledge his presence before going back to sleep, the aide said.

The visit lasted just three minutes.

Talking with the reporters later, Estrada remarked, "I thought of embracing his mother from the machines, although the doctor said no, whether to pull the plug was his. He said he was hesitating if all agree God.

"We'll wait up to the last breath," he said. "I think it's comforting [the timing of their major events in his life—his mother in hospital lying seriously ill and the Sandiganbayan about to announce its verdict.

The court gave the ousted President a 14-hour pass yesterday to visit his mother before the 6pm. 12 promulgation.

Ferdi Barisa, Estrada's media liaison, said the mother-and-son encounter ended with the son retreating in a room because Estrada projected he him just across from his mother's.

There, Ramos said, Estrada sat by himself on a plastic chair at the foot of an empty bed, trying to seek solace in the silence in the room.

'I don't know what to do'

"We did not mention anything about the promulgation on Wednesday," Ramos said. "It was enough for him that his mother saw him."

Estrada's lawyer, former Solicitor Marcelo Ramos came into the room to chat.

"I came talk to my Mama anymore. She's in critical condition. I am at a loss, I don't know what to do," Estrada said when Ramos left. He said he was also hesitating if all agree God.

"We'll wait up to the last breath," he said. "I think it's comforting [the timing of their major events in his life—his mother in hospital lying seriously ill and the Sandiganbayan about to announce its verdict.

The court gave the ousted President a 14-hour pass yesterday to visit his mother before the 6pm. 12 promulgation.

Ferdi Barisa, Estrada's media liaison, said the mother-and-son encounter ended with the son retreating in a room because really projected he him just across from his mother's.

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Estrada consulting his brothers and sisters with these words: "Be strong. Don't worry about me."

No politics, please

In Sydney, Australia, where she was on a visit to attend a summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum, President Macapagal-Arroyo brushed off questions on the forthcoming Estrada verdict.

"No, I don't discuss politics," Ms Arroyo told reporters. "I told you only Apec issues."

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro chairs the Special Division. Associate Justices Francisco Villaruz Jr. and Diosdado Peralta are the members.

Prosecutors flocked to Estrada's home on Polk Street yesterday to offer "moral support" to the former President. They included Senators Manuel Villar, Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Juan Ponce Enrile and Manuel Roxas II, Caguyan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez and Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay.

Binay said Estrada's supporters were planning to hold rallies on Independent Day.

To those who harbor "malicious" thoughts about the gatherings, Binay assured them that they would "hold peaceful rallies."

Asked if there would be a repeat of Edsa 3—the angry 2004 march of Estrada supporters to Malacañang culminating in a riot outside the Palace gates—both Binay and Quezon City Mayor Feliy Trinidad said they could not assure anyone that there would be no repeat of the Palace siege.

"We don't know what the people's feelings will be," Binay said.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, Estrada's son and counsel in the case, urged his father's supporters to "pray for an acquittal." Starting today, the Estrada family will hold a vigil at Polk Street to pray for his father's release, he said.

Erap confident

A statement read to reporters by Rodriguez said Estrada was confident the court would acquit him.

It said Estrada would accept the court's decision, saying that the people "have already acquitted" him.

"The lawyers recognize that it was just not a criminal trial but more of a political one. ... The Presidena and his counsel are still hoping that the Sandiganbayan will decide the case based solely on the merits and on no other considerations," the statement said.

Estrada told his lawyers—Jay Flaminiano, Jose Flaminiano, Brian Sugiyama and Rodelio Mendoza—not to think proper day to discuss their legal moves in case of an acquittal or a conviction.

They also talked about last-minute pleadings to the Sandiganbayan, including their request to sit live the promulgation of the decision.

A quiet life

If acquitted, Estrada said he would go straight to the nearest church to thank God "for the vindication of his name."

If convicted, Estrada said his counsel would file a motion for reconsideration and appeal the sentence to the Supreme Court.

"As to where he will be detained pending appeal of his case, he will likewise leave that to the court's wisdom. Whatever the decision of the Sandiganbayan, he will accept it," Rodriguez said.

Estrada is ready to live a quiet life if the court acquits him, the congressman said.

"He will not reclaim the presidency of which he was unconstitutionally ousted. He said he would act as an elder statesman to give advice on governance and nation-building with professorial attention to the press," Rodriguez said.

Security was strict during Estrada's last hours with The arrayed—some prohibited him from giving interviews, forcing the media to resort to outdoor interviews.

Jeanette Sloman, the Estrada family physician, said Mary Ejercito's condition was "stable and guarded." a month after she was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia.

Sloman said the physician attending to the Ejercito matriarch constantly update Estrada on his mother's condition, including the two mini-strokes she suffered in the past seven months.

Sloman said the doctor had to insert a tube in her throat to help her breathe and a feeding tube in the left side of her stomach.

Because of her age, it has been difficult for doctors to extubate her condition and complicate matters, Sloman said. But she can still hear and understand anyone who talks to her, he said.

Former Sorsogon Gov. Jun Lozada, "Daniel" Zúñiga, the chief prosecution witness against Estrada, said yesterday he was "very, very confident that the evidence presented [against Estrada] was overwhelming to merit the conviction."

Zúñiga claimed Estrada's admission that he signed in "Jose Velarde" in a bank document clinched the prosecution's case. "I think it was the final nail," he said. With reports from Jaehee Hwang, Cathy Ladera, Nikko Dizon and Leonardo-Ruiz Jr., Reporter Northern Luzon

9-hour Filipino film ...

From page A1

Venice Film Festival on Saturday.

The top prize went to "Wayang (Darkness)" by Chinese Jia Zhangke.

Diaz and Zhangke were against each other in the race as Jonathan Demme and Julian Schnabel were in the competition for the group's main and player-lobbies.

"Encantos" mixes documentary and fiction. It is not a mail investment. Diaz described his film and his main characters, dynamic. "I created Benjamin with no particular Filipino artist in my mind. My subconscious merely flowed with all the threads that ended up with the lead character in the nine-hour film. But, Benjamin's journey is [another version] for the search by travelers ... the search for beauty, real love, redemption, and for answers that could push humanity to greater heights."

He added: "The Russian bit is a send-up to my late father, although he never wrote to anyone. Yes, I know how it feels to be alone in distant lands...I learn about solitude and sorrow, so I know Benjamin Agsuan."

Asian rule

Taiwanese director Ang Lee's sexually explicit spy thriller "Lust, Caution" was the surprise winner of the top award at the Venice film festival, just two years after he won with "Brokeback Mountain."

The movie is a World War II thriller set in Shanghai featuring long and sometimes violent sex scenes but has himself were cool.

The verdict means Asian directors have won the Golden Lion on the Lido waterfront for the past three years.

Actress Gillian Lien, the best director went to US filmmaker Brian De Palma, whose "Redacted" shocked audiences with its brutal reconstruction of the real-life rape and murder of a 14-year-old Iraqi girl by American soldiers in 2006.

Best actress, actor

Sidse Babett Knudsen, one of six US productions in competition, scooped a consolation prize with "In That There," her portrayal and biopic about singer-songwriter Bob Dylan.

In a bold piece of casting, Australian-born Cate Blanchett was one of six performers to play the singer-poet Bob Dylan at various stages of his life, and it paid off when she was named best actress in Venice.

Hollywood star Brad Pitt was the surprise winner of the best actor award for his portrayal of legendary outlaw Jesse James in "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford." With reports from Jean-ael Lee Dolorosmio and Honey

Apec steel fences rented from Bayani?

From page A1

joqui Arroyo noticed the rust over and steel fences put up in this city to protect the 21 leaders in the two-day Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit which ended yesterday.

"I wonder where they rented the steel fences," Ms Arroyo quipped during an almost two-hour chat with reporters in her suite at the Four Seasons Luxe Sanctuary hotel.

"Fernando," she reporter said.

Ms Arroyo laughed and said: "That's everybody's joke. You all remembered Bayani when you saw the fences," referring to Bayani Fernando, chair of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Fernando's ubiquitous pink fences on Edsa and the Apec's gray fences in Sydney looked like they were cast from the same mold.

Reportedly Australia's most stringent security lockdown in its history, the US$ 8.6 million steel fences sealed off most of the city's central business district, the areas surrounding the Opera House and the hotels where Apec leaders US President George W. Bush, Chinese President Hu Jintao, Russian President Vladimir Putin and even Ms Arroyo were billeted.

As part of the security, Bush hawk helicopter flew over Sydney and in airspace was declared a no-fly zone. Road barricades, heavy duty patrolled the streets and there were divers scouring the waters and more than 1,500 personnel of the Australian Defense Force were deployed around the city.

The government had declared a holiday on Friday and most businesses, fenced off by the security lockdown, reportedly left the city while the world's most powerful leaders mixed business with pleasure during the Apec talks.

Ms Arroyo could not mingle people in the main as the Apec summit, prompting Bush to whisper his pun and take notes.

She also chastised her envoy in an informal meeting with Fiji, who yesterday invited her to attend the special Olympic World Summit Game in Shanghai next month. Ms Arroyo accepted.

Aside from Bush and Hu, Ms Arroyo met with Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark and Thai Prime Minister Samaput Thaksuvan on the sidelines of the two-day Apec summit which ended yesterday.

Ms Arroyo surprised reporters and her own officials when she broke the news that she already had meetings with Bush, Hu and Badawi, as well as with Clark and Drakeman which were not on her schedule.

She said her meetings took place during coffee breaks or while they were waiting for the Apec summit to begin.

While meeting on Saturday Ms Arroyo and Badawi decided to sit down and talk although their bilateral meeting was set for Sunday. (Story on Page A24.)

"That's the style now. It's more practical," she said of the informal "pull-aside" meetings.

Ambassador Maximo Mayor Jr., chief of protocol and protocol-and-ceremonies, signed hand that the Erand six dawn meetings that are planned in advance.

In pull-asides, the leaders are just talking to one another without their ministers and staff present. Ms Arroyo said she will make freely own on contentious issues, according to Reyes.

Although her formal bilateral meeting with Bush was cancelled on Friday, Ms Arroyo managed to get Bush's ear in two informal encounters where she made sure the US president would remember his promise to support the Filipino veterans bill, military and the purchase of helicopters and vessels for the "Search Coast Watch" border patrol against terrorists, and the construction of roads and airports in hills and harbors.

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Across the NATION

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SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The Zambales provincial government has asked officials of Subic town to release documents pertaining to a relocation project funded by a South Korean firm, and repair and complete the site's facilities.

The relocation site in Sitio Agombin was funded by the Hanjin Heavy Industries Co. Ltd. for about 400 families displaced by its $1.089-billion shipbuilding project in Subic since April.

The provincial government's Task Force Hanjin has requested at least eight kinds of documents and answers from Mayor Jeffrey Garcia through a letter on Sept. 5.

RISING and winds awake this sad home this building.

Documents

These are the certified true copies of the program of work, plans and specifications of all projects listed in Hanjin's purchase order for P10 million worth of construction materials for 23 public facilities in May building permits issued in the community and "change order" that authorizes the realignment of identified projects in the enumeration of four school buildings.

It also asked a list of actions taken by the mayor's office and municipal board to address the ongoing concerns and problems of the residents, master plan of the relocation site, certified true copy of the environmental compliance certificate issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for the relocation site, and copies of certificates of titles to the residents.

The task force, headed by former Vice Gov. Ramon Lachan Jr., had found "several structures missing and damaged" at the upland relocation site located off the route of the Subic-Olongapo.

Garcia told the Inquirer on Sunday that he received a copy of the letter and that he would furnish the task force with documents.

He said structures were damaged because the "contractors ended with work since the residents did not want to leave and Hanjin and the (Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority) already wants the site."

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said it was the representatives of Hanjin, not SBMA, who negotiated with the residents for compensation damages.

Garcia and former Zambales Gov. Vicente Magsaysay denied handling the P34-million budget as payments for demolished homes.

Funds

Garcia also said he would not accede to the requests to repair and complete the structures since there were no more funds for them.

He said a Department of Public Works and Highways team had assessed that the contractor, South Seoul Hardware and General Merchandise, had spent P32.5 million for the structures on site.

Cost

An Inquirer source at the DPWH, however, said the structures on site was only P3 million.

Hanjin, in a March 2006 signed bilateral agreement with Garcia and Arreza, said a classic "free from any war memorial or any other demands whatsoever from any entities in relation to the project beyond the ₱10 million (loan)."

Improvements

Garcia said the town government could improve the relocation site with the help of the SBMA and the national government.

The task force, on the order of Gov. Amor Deloso, has asked the Subic government to demolish two damaged school buildings, construct a footbridge, build three elevated water tanks, do slope protection works, improve the roads and drainage system, and provide electricity to the site.

Jhunnie Grojan, Inquirer Central Luzon

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BCDA exec OKs third-party evaluation of expressway

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—A top official of the Bases Conversion Development Authority has not opposed a proposal of a private advocacy group to do an independent engineering evaluation of the P27-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway now that the project is in its third stage of construction.

"Nothing problema. (There's no problem.)," BCDA executive vice president Jose Paeo III said after he spoke to leaders of the Advocacy for the Development of Central Luzon (ADCL) who inspired here their inspection of the Balintawak-Pampanga segment of the Subic highway on Saturday.

However, Paeo said there were "already several value-chances" in that undertaking.

"Aside from our consultants, we have an inter-agency bonanza-type performance evaluation system or CPES1 group and a quantity surveyor (that's looking at what the contractors are doing). We have a different group that's doing the punch listing (quality evaluation). We also have the (Toll Regulatory Board) that is doing an independent certification (of work) and then there's the Commission on Audit," Paeo said.

The BCDA, as the proponent of the SCTEx, has hired the Japanese consulting consortium Pacific Consultants International, Katahira and Engineers International and Nippon Koei Co. Ltd.

The BCDA has two CPE1 teams comprised of government engineers, according to Regina Ines Lapuz, BCDA corporate management chief.

BCDA president Narciso Abaya, in an earlier statement, said punch listing or the process of conducting a quality check list for every 20-meter sub-segment is being done by SCTEx project managers.

Paeo said the evaluation is done "to protect the interest of the government and the consumers."

PORTIONS of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway on the Balintawak-Pampanga side remained unfinished and the contractor has an 60-month-more up to March 2008 to complete what good manual roads as a world-class highway.

The Philippine government has obtained a P22.09-billion loan from the Japanese government and drafted out P4 billion from BCDA funds to build this major infrastructure that links the Subic and Clark freeports and the Luzon Industrial Park in Tarlac City.

The loan comes with an interest rate of 0.95 percent, grace period of 10 years and repayment period of 30 years.

BCDA's construction—Kajima-Obayashi-JFE Engineering and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. Joint Venture (KOJFE) on the Subic-Pampanga side and Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd.-Asian Construction and Development Corp. (HHI-ACDC) on the Pampanga-Clark side—have incurred delays largely due to right-of-way problems.

SCTEx, now 87 percent done with its work, has been given four months more up to March 2008 to finish its 93.63-km segment. HHI, meanwhile 97 percent finished, has been allowed a 94-day extension up to October to complete its 43.27-km portion, according to Roberto Gervasio, SCTEx managing director-operations support.

While the groups doing the evaluations, Paeo said, "Talagang salungat sila sa (It is really being thoroughly evaluated)."

He did not say though if the evaluation proposed by ADCL needed the nod of the BCDA board.

"We are open. Nobody is stopping anybody. Bisan sun-daryong sa evaluation (Any evaluation)," Paeo told ADCL chair Peter Romero.

Paeo encouraged some 30 business leaders of ADCL to continue involving themselves in monitoring activities because the SCTEx's final phase was the "most critical stage" of the project.

"We want it to be finished according to standards," he said.

Tarsette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

ROUNDUP

British funds cops' training

PARANG, Shariff Kabunsuan — The British government has earmarked some $440,000 for the training of Marawi City policemen as a tool to ease them some needed law enforcers, Chief Supt. Jose Gotiaoco, chief of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) police, said.

Aside from training the police force on crime documentation and community policing, the British government will also send out a new police station there, Gotiaoco added. "This is big help for our cops. Once completed, we will make Bangsamoro have there as we model in the entire region," Gotiaoco said.

Marawi City would be the second municipality in the ARMM to receive the project that aimed to standardize police operations and procedures, technical and equipment capabilities and physical infrastructure of police stations nationwide. Earlier, the Marikina City police also received the same assistance. *Jeffrey Ablaza, Inquirer Mindanao*

Davao pact with China city

Dated 2 (UT)— The cities of Davao and Nanning, China signed a friendship and bilateral trade, commerce, investments, tourism, education and culture.

Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said there were no specific investments discussed between the two cities yet but he hoped that deals could be signed anytime soon.

"China is buying almost everything. China is ready to invest. China holds a great promise to catch up with the rest of world. We have the resources... our neighbor (not China) has the money," Duterte told reporters after the Mayor Pole ballot here a day ago the morning.

Duterte said Davao businessmen will fly to Nanning in October. "We will be bringing trade delegates, businessmen and investors and there's a good deal," he said.

Nanning Mayor Chen Xiangguo said the visit would be an opportunity for Davao businessmen to show their products. He also said he was hoping that the future investors from between his city and Davao would result to the opening of an air route between the two cities. *Jocelyn Avelin, Inquirer Mindanao*

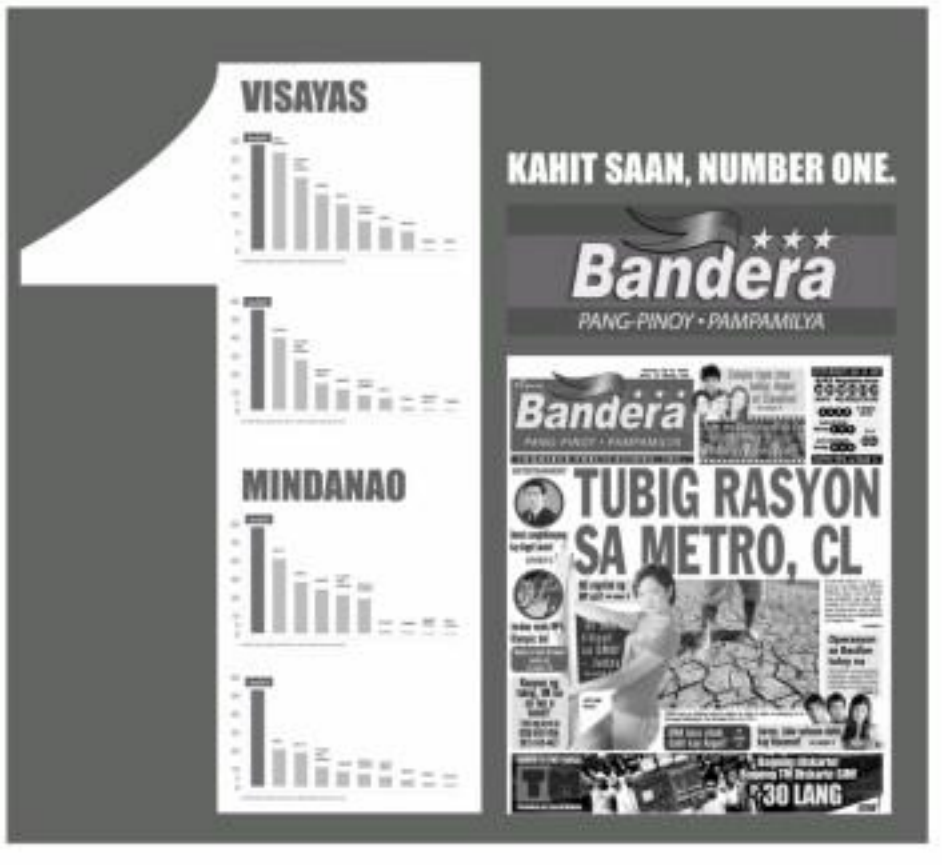
3 persons slain in ambush

ISABELA, North Cotabato—Three people, including a member of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), were killed during an ambush staged by unidentified gunmen here on Sept. 2, an MNLF commander reported.

Datu Dima Ambol, chair of the MNLF's Sebangan Mukaseb State Revolutionary Committee (SEDRC), identified the victims as his driver in security escort, Ryan Hontes, 29; Barnaby Madrid, said 13-year-old girl Rasad Mangon.

Ambol said the three victims were on their way home from a wedding around 11:00 p.m. when attacked near their village.

"We (Christian) are the main target. We are looking into how Ibanglin and partisan, again armed, because he is 40 rifle was missing," Ambol said. *Jeffrey Ablaza, Inquirer Mindanao*



Firm behind Romblon oil leak lacks ECC

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA —The shipping company behind the sinking operation of a rundown sea vessel that led to an oil leak off the coast of Romblon did not have a environment clearance certificate (ECC) to conduct lifesaving operations in the area, a police official said on Thursday.

Romblon police chief Senior Supt. Mario Velarde also revealed that Mayor Lemuel Ciprianu of Concepcion town had allowed Salvador Caltex Enterprises to retrieve the wreck of MV Wenton despite its failure to present pertinent documents for the activity.

He said the mayor had already suspended the operations of the shipping company upon confirming the oil leak on Wednesday, a day after it was first reported.

"That's the problem. The mayor allowed the operation to proceed even though the company had no ECC and necessary permits," Velarde said after he issued a phone statement.

Explosives

When asked if the mayor was aware that the personnel behind the salvaging operation were using explosives, he said: "Of course. The mayor knows it."

Asked why he failed police allowed the lifesaving operations if it did not have any ECC, he replied: "Because they had a permit from (Camp) Crame for the explosives."

He also admitted that the place where the lifesaving activities happened was near the line of coral reefs, which is home to hundreds of sea plant and animal species.

"If there would be somebody who should guard the area, it should be the mayor's men," he argued.

Velarde said the compartment containing the fuel might have been damaged by the explosives used in the salvaging operation, thus causing the leak.

But he maintained that the leak was just "minimal" and did not pose any serious threat to marine life in the area.

Ill-fated ship

He said the company, which supposedly owned the submerged passenger ship that sank sometime in 1973, had been recovering parts of the wreckage since June.

He said that from the time the company started removing the ill-fated ship, its personnel used explosives to cut its metal portions.

PO1 Joel de Castro, case investigator of the Romblon police, said the shipping firm sold whatever it recovered from the derelict.

Dr Castro said his office was informed of the oil leak after residents held a protest rally to denounce the activity of the company.

The wreck, he said, was located just a few kilometers away from the coastline of Barangay Magsaysay and within the municipal fishing grounds.

He said the fishermen feared that the lives of all those they were washed ashore would adversely affect their health and livelihood.

He said that based on their initial inspection, the contaminant on the water was crude oil.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

PEÑAFRANCIA RITES

The nine-day Penafrancia fiesta, which starts on the first Friday of September, attracts mostly male devotees.

Msgr. Ronnie Nargaro, rector of Our Lady of Peñafrancia Basilica and the local Church prepare for the biggest event of the decade when the 400th anniversary celebration of the devotion to the Ina culminates on 2012. It was 2007 in 2008, the image of the Ina will visit all the 500 parishes in Bicol, covering six diocesan and one prelature.

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4 provinces in E. Visayas with disaster-prone areas

By Nan Lubra
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—GOVERNMENT experts have identified four provinces in Eastern Visayas, along with 23 towns, as having areas that are high risk to landslide and flooding during the rainy season.

Salvador Estrellita, Office of Civil Defense (OCD) regional director, named the Eastern Visayas provinces as Leyte, Southern Leyte, Northern Samar and Eastern Samar.

Other provinces with disaster-prone areas are Surigao del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Siargao, Siargao, Bohol, Aurora, Pampanga, Cavite, Catanduanes, Zambales, Antique, Bicol, Sur, Mt. Province, Ifugao, Benguet, Quirino, Agusan, Nueva Vizcaya, Capiz, Iloilo, Zamboanga Sibugay, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Iloilo, Davao Norte and Benguet.

The OCD identified these provinces in its Hazard Mapping and Assessment for Effective Community-based Disaster Risk Management project.

Also known as the ready project and funded by the United Nations Development Program, it identifies disaster-prone areas through the construction of multi-hazard maps, develops information education and communication strategies and materials, and installs community-based early-warning systems.

Estrellita said the project would encourage concerned municipal and barangay officials to review their development plans and come up with settlements to reduce the risk of disaster.

In Leyte, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau has identified 602 of the 1,561 barangays assessed early last year as landslide-prone, said Karlo Queaño, senior science research specialist of the MGB.

Of the barangays assessed, 117 were found to have high landslide susceptibility, 248 have moderate susceptibility, and 240 have low susceptibility.

The remaining 739 villages were found to be not susceptible to landslide.

Leyte has 1,040 barangays, but some far-flung barangays were not reached during the rapid assessment on landslide and flooding susceptibility conducted by MGB geologists from April 24 to May 15, 2006.

The assessment was conducted shortly after the February 2006 landslide in Guinsaygon Guinsaugon of St. Bernard town in Southern Leyte, which buried and killed over 1,000 people.

Since then, the government has produced multihazard maps that include topographic maps for floods, landslides, storm surge, and earthquake- and volcanic-related hazards.

Queaño was one of the discussants in the assessment workshop on the results of the multihazard mapping in Leyte held in the city. He talked about landslide hazards in Leyte.

Rainfall, earthquake or man-made activities could trigger landslide particularly in areas where the slopes are steep, Queaño said.

Signs of impending landslides include leaning doors/jambs and windows, cracks in concrete floors and walls, cracks in roads that gradually grow, bunking of trees, poles and retaining walls, and cracking that increasingly becomes louder.

Care programs for reporters of disasters urged

By Nestor U Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—JOURNALISTS have called on news organizations to institute care programs for reporters covering disasters and emergencies so they would not be traumatized by these events.

Twenty journalists from regional newspapers in the Visayas, who attended a three-day seminar on reporting on disasters and emergencies organized by the Philippine Press Institute and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), said reporters, who extensively cover traumatic experiences and deal with victims, face the risk of psychological trauma.

They recommended to a workshop that news organizations ensure their reporters before they are sent to cover emergencies and disasters. Tips on dealing with disaster victims and survivors, especially those suffering from trauma, should be part of the orientation.

The reporters should also undergo debriefing after covering disasters and emergencies. They said reporters assigned to cover disasters and emergencies should be rotated to avoid trauma and other psychological effects of regularly covering these events.

Disasters and emergencies are among the biggest stories covered by journalists in the Visayas. Reporters face year excessively covered the Guinsaugon landslide in Southern Leyte and the massive oil spills in Guimaras.

While countless of traumatizing objectivity and detachment from the stories they cover, reporters are not immune from moral and emotional stress that could result in trauma, said Dr. Jose Pagsolo on Lopez, a trauma expert of the University of the Philippines Department of Psychology.

Pagsolo on Lopez, one of the resource speakers, said journalists were among the most vulnerable in psychological trauma because they were expected to be present even in the most harrowing experiences and events.

"Journalists cannot be immune [to the impact of the disasters, armed conflicts and emergencies] even if there is pressure to be detached from the situation," she said.

She said she had known of cases where reporters exposed for a long time to remains of flood or landslide victims manifested signs of trauma only when they had returned to newsrooms or their homes.

Journalists, she said, are exposed to tale—even the most gruesome sights to write, could manifest trauma through drinking, gambling and verbal and physical abuse of family members.

Hagabtan Lopez said reporters could also experience "vicarious traumatization" for listening to accounts of victims and survivors during interviews. The psychological and emotional impacts accumulate when they are continuously suppressed, she said.

"We don't know what toll it is taking on reporters," she said.

She said traumatic events could "disrupt" the spiritual values and beliefs, as well as the sense of safety of a person. These also lead people to isolate themselves.

Aside from debriefing sessions, news organizations should also train the reporters assigned to cover disasters and emergencies to recognize them from the potentially traumatic environment, she said.

But the psychiatrist said one of the most effective way of dealing with stress and trauma in covering disasters and emergencies was for reporters to write positive stories, especially of survivors and those showing and realizing acts like faith and goodness.

"Positive stories are also healing for reporters," she said.

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GMA heeds Badawi call for peace

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SYDNEY (VIA PLDT)—INTRI MALAYSIAN Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi predicting her, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the Philippine government will resume peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front at "anytime."

Ms Arroyo said Badawi urged her to resume the talks derailed by the recent clashes in Maguindanao, during their meeting on Saturday while they were waiting for the opening of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit at the Opera House here. The two leaders were scheduled to sit down for a two-and-a-half-hour meeting yesterday outside the opera house.

"He urged me to go back. I said yes, we will go back to the peace table," Ms Arroyo said in an interview with reporters in the presidential suite of the Four Seasons Hotel Saturday night after the dinner for Apec leaders and a cultural presentation at the Opera House that was followed by a spectacular fireworks display.

Determined

Malaysia hosts the peace negotiations between the Philippines and the secessionist MILF.

"We already finished with our [meeting]," she said laughing, when reporters asked her what the agenda of her Sunday meeting with Badawi would be.

"We talked about the peace process and we're going to resume it[s] anytime," she said.

The President said Badawi was very keen on having the peace talks resume.

"Determined is the more descriptive word than optimistic because he wants—and we want—the peace talks to succeed," she said.

The President said they discussed details of the peace process with the MILF.

"We talked about a few details of the same but not about the exit point, the time of the final peace agreement[, we didn't] talk about that," she said.

Asked if the aid cutoff Badawi of the current military offensive against elements of the MILF and the Abu Sayyaf herald [a] group in the future, she said: "It's very well aware [of that]."

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Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

CA upholds GMA civil case against TV host, ABS-CBN

By Lala B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS RULED IN FAVOR OF GMA NETWORK Inc. which filed a civil case against its rival television network, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., for hiring actress Roxanna Rocos as a show biz talk show host in 2004 despite the fact that she was still under contract with GMA.

"It is a basic premise that every person must, in the exercise of his rights and in the performance of his duties, act with justice, give everyone his due, and observe honesty and good faith. The mere rule applies even in cases of business competition for if it were otherwise, then there would be chaos and anarchy in society," the appellate court said in its Aug. 31 decision.

The court upheld a Quezon City regional trial court ruling which denied a motion from ABS-CBN seeking to dismiss GMA's complaint.

According to the appellate court, it found no merit in ABS-CBN's argument that since it is a business rival of GMA, its interference in the latter's business relations was justifiable.

It also dismissed ABS-CBN's contention that Rocos' contract with GMA could be considered terminated after she announced that she was retiring from the entertainment industry, a move that GMA did not object to.

Rocos, Jennifer Sheldon in real life, had a contract with GMA to host the show for talk show, "Startalk," from March 2003 to March 2005. When she announced her intention from the entertainment industry in July 2004, she still had eight months left in her contract, which also prohibited her from appearing on shows with the same format as Startalk without GMA's consent.

GMA filed the civil suit against ABS-CBN for hiring Rocos as a co-host for its show for talk show, "The Buzz," a few months after she said she was retiring from show business to spend more time with her family.

Shortly after her announcement, ABS-CBN aired plugs announcing the actress' appearance on "The Buzz." In December 2004, it hired her in on-host the show despite a letter from GMA informing them of Rocos' existing contract with the network.

LAZY SUNDAY MORNING
A man casts his fishing rod into the waters off Roxas Boulevard, hoping for a bite or two.

Another student group seeks justice for UP hazing victim

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT POLITICAL party at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, that suspected hazing victim Cris Aechery-Morales was affiliated with, have called for justice for his death.

The Palm-NCPAG issued a statement last week, nearly two weeks after Morales died, following criticisms that it has not taken a stand on the incident.

"Amidst our incalculable grief, we choose not to respond to politically and ethically motivated insinuations that we are doing nothing. Instead, we chose to be with Cris' family and loved ones in their decent but determined quest for justice," it said.

Morales, a senior public administration student, was the representative of his college—the Sociology College of Public Administration and Governance (SOPAG)—to the UP Student Council. He was also an executive member of the Palm-NCPAG.

In a copy of the statement obtained by the INQUIRY, Palm-NCPAG expressed sorrow over Morales's "untimely death which brought grief to everyone whose lives had been touched by the warmth he exuded and the concern he extended."

"His death is not a profound loss and a gargantuan blow to us all who were his fellow travelers in his journey to becoming a great student leader. Now, Cris is gone. He is never coming back home, he can no longer hit (fill) his dreams for his family," it added.

Morales, whose brain hemorrhage died of hazing-related injuries, was brought on Aug. 27 to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center where he was declared dead on arrival. An autopsy report said that he had been severely beaten up due to the numerous bruises all over his body.

Investigators on the hazing reports that the victim joined the Tigers Rho fraternity before his death.

Hope, a sigh of relief and a home for Smokey Mountain residents

By Allison W. Lopez

RESIDENTS OF SMOKEY MOUNTAIN IN Tondo, Manila, are heaving a sigh of relief following the recent Supreme Court decision upholding the validity of the deal that a multinational firm formerly dump trash in a housing project for scavengers.

"Maraya kami kasi napinsuyan na legal ang naging proseso sa Smokey Mountain. Mahaba ang pinagdaanan, parang sa mga taon (we strongly believe) na 'We are happy because it was proven that the legal process was followed in Smokey Mountain). We feel relieved. It's like we took holiday)," said Mercedes Saratoga, leader of the Smokey Mountain Alliance of Concerned Beneficiaries.

In 2004, lawyer Frank Chavez questioned the joint-venture agreement between the Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) and Filipino-Israeli firm Steinberg and Moelis B-E Builders Inc. Chavez said SBM, the project developers, could not acquire the public lands for the 31 high-rise housing units.

With the high court's ruling that the contract was "valid, legal and constitutional," the residents said they could now breathe freely.

Saratoga's 30-square meter unit on the second floor of Building 15 may be a tight fit for her family of eight, but it has a small living room, a kitchen, toilet and bath and even a loft for the bedrooms.

Now, all they have to worry about is their livelihood, a problem for majority of the community's 25,000 residents, Saratoga said.

She complained that although some economic women's in Tondo migrated their livelihood/ incomes, they could not find jobs because of their lack of skills and job opportunities.

"Gusto namalungan kami sa livelihood, kaso yung Tesda (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority) ay training U with Tesda could help with our livelihood problem, especially with training," she said.

Tesda, added Saratoga, used to conduct livelihood courses in the area like paper flower making or food processing. There were also short seminars on making jewelry and throw pillows, which would have been useful but they didn't have the capital or a market for their products, Saratoga added.

As a result, most beneficiaries have a hard time paying the amortization for their houses, she told the Inquirer.

Despite financial circumstances, Saratoga said they felt luckier compared to other people who lived on the streets.

"We're proud when people ask us where we live. Paradise Heights is really the name of the project but we call our group Smokey Mountain because we don't want to forget what we went through," she said in Tagalog.

DID YOU KNOW

37 S.C.: The regions in the Philippines, Metro Manila had the highest unemployment rate (12.5 percent) in April 2007, followed by Central Luzon (10.2 percent). During the same period, the country's national unemployment rate at 7.4 percent. This means that about 2.3 million more persons of the country's labor force nationwide had 26.4 million members) that as jobs.

Carl C. Bonoan, Inquirer Research

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2 priests to be arraigned on libel charges today

NO GOOD FOR TWO-WAY TRAFFIC
Fr. Rafael Cruz Jr., Mr. Mateo Sr., Sales, Quezon City—"I am calling on the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Quezon City government to phase-out Jacinto Street in Barangay Santa Aurora near the Quezon Institute. Here, you can find informal settlers, several vehicles as longer is can, small stores, car accessories stores and a refreshing shop surrounding on the street. As a result, Jacinto has become a one-way route for vehicles instead of the two-way street that it is." ALVIN CELINO

Unpleasant sight and sounds

THERE are plenty of drunk vagrants at the back of the City College of Manila. You can also hear the sound of cow water blaring loud broadcasts at 8 in the p.m. which disturb not only passersby but tenants and residents on Iso Viceras and Mangubat streets.

JENNIFER DIAZ, Sta. Mesa, Manila

Where are traffic aides?

I WANT to report the heavy traffic on Quirino Highway in Bagong Silangan, Quezon City, which has been under rehabilitation for the two months now. No local government official is doing his or her job to ensure the smooth flow of traffic. Please help. Many thanks.

ALBERT DE JESUS-Highway, Bagong Silangan, Quezon City

Motorists' plea

A STREET crew digging near our subdivision has to contend to causing traffic and other associated problems. This has been reported before by motorists, but calls printed elsewhere don't seem to care at all.

ANGEL DE CARLOS, Caloocan City

Attention, Muntinlupa City government officials!

WHERE is the mayor of Muntinlupa or any of his officials? Do they ever visit the Alabang area at all? Traffic there is such a mess! Jeepney drivers block the streets, especially in front of the 7-11 convenience store and the barangay hall. These obstructions, including the sidewalk vendors, are all ways the cause of traffic nightmares in the area. Please help us do something about this.

ANGEL DE JESUS, Cavite

By DJ Yap

TWO CATHOLIC PRIESTS WHO accused a pulp and paper-milling company of polluting the air and water in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur, will be arraigned today on libel charges at a Makati court.

Fathers Flavio Falcon and Erwin Emanuel Torres will enter their pleas in five and two counts of libel, respectively, before Judge Alberico Umali of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150.

The case stemmed from statements the priests made against Pinoy Paramount Inc., accusing it of committing environment violations in Bislig, which they alleged had led to health ailments among residents.

Falcon, the parish priest of St. Vincent de Paul in Matagongon and Torres, his assistant, also led demonstrations to air attempt to have PPI to comply with environment laws, and at one point, wrote President Macapagal-Arroyo about the problems.

The statements published in local papers, as well as their letter to the President, served as basis for the suit, which was filed on Aug. 2 after Department of Justice prosecutors found probable cause that libel was committed.

Warrants for the arrest of Falcon and Torres were issued by Umali on Aug. 7.

On Aug. 14, Falcon posted a bail bond of P60,000 for his temporary liberty. Torres followed suit on Sept. 19 and posted a cash bond of P20,000.

Korean man jumps from 8th floor of condo unit in Malate

By Allison W. Lopez

A KOREAN TOURIST DIED shortly after midnight yesterday after he fell from the eighth floor of a condominium in what the police said was a case of suicide.

The body of Choi Soo Shin, 31, also known as Lango Choi of Hamdong, South Korea, was found sprawled on 12:15 a.m. on the parking lot of the Legaspi Towers in Malate, Manila, where he was staying.

Officers on case PO2 Edgardo Ko of the Manila Police District Homicide division said that Choi suffered multiple injuries.

Initial investigation showed that Choi arrived in the country two months ago with his sister, Juliana Lee, as a tourist. He rented a unit on the eighth floor of the condominium while Lee stayed on the 15th floor with two Filipino friends identified as Cristine Ong and Lolit Catabang.

Catabang told the police that yesterday before the incident, Choi called her up and asked her to buy him three bottles of beer. She added that she suspected was not normal since the victim often drank alone in his room.

Catabang said that on her way back to the condominium after buying the beer as a concerned mom, she heard a commotion at the front desk. She then learned that Choi had jumped from the building.

A security guard tailed the Koreans on the Digital ng Bhayan. In her the victim died at 2:45 a.m. while undergoing resuscitation.

He said that several weeks ago, the victim, who was drunk, had tried to jump off the penthouse but was prevented from doing so by some people.

The policeman added that despite evidence showing that the Korean had taken his life, investigators would still conduct a probe to rule out foul play in the case.

METROBRIEFS

Manila honors 'the Sword and the Pen'

MAYOR Alfredo Lim will lead the first-ever "Sword and Pen" celebration honoring two great Manileños—Gen. Macario Sakay ("sword") and National Artist for Literature Amado V. Hernandez ("pen"). The affair will be held on Sept. 13 at 9 a.m. at the Plaza Miranda. Remember on Quezon Street in Tondo, Manila. The program will include a wreath-laying ceremony, patriotic music by Manila Symphony and the distribution of pamphlets on the lives of the "Sword and Pen" heroes. Sakay was born in Tondo in 1870. He joined the Katipunan and became a general of the Revolutionary Army of the first Philippine Republic. With other Katipuneros, he established the Republika ng Katagalugan and resisted the Americans in Cavite, Batangas and Pampanga. Hernandez was born on Sept. 13, 1900. He was a prolific poet, essayist, novelist, playwright and journalist, and the winner of numerous literary awards. His most famous work, "Isang Dipang Langit," a satire on 4 centuries, was written in prison. He was married to Isabella Ileto. Mang de la Rosa. He died in 1978 and was posthumously proclaimed a National Artist.

Experts warn Bin Laden video may signal attacks

WASHINGTON—INTELLIGENCE EXPERTS scouring the latest video of Osama bin Laden for clues reacted on Saturday that the message offers hints that al-Qaida is planning another attack on US interests.

In his first video appearance in three years, the elusive al-Qaida chief mocks the United States as "weak" and vows to escalate fighting in Iraq, all the while using language similar to the kind used ahead of other past attacks.

In Urdu, Bin Laden speaks directly to Americans, using plain language that "appears to be crafted in a way as to be understood by the average person on the street in Europe or in the US," said intelligence analysts Don Surber.

The latest video "contains phrases ... which serve as indicators that OBL's message is part of al-Qaida's efforts to fulfill its requirements to provide warning and a chance for the enemy to change its ways before executing an attack," Surber said.

However, the message, delivered days ahead of the sixth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States in which 3,000 people were killed, gives no clues "as to indicate where an attack ... would be attempted," he said.

The language, saying peace will befall "he who follows the guidance," mirrors that used in Bin Laden's "European union offer" of April 2004 in which he said: "Peace upon those who followed the right path."

The similarity in terms is important because the 2004 message appealing to Europeans to change their ways was the final message aimed specifically at Europeans before the July 2005 bombings in London which killed 52 people, and attacks of the Madrid train bombings.

In the video, Bin Laden also discusses current events but leaves no direct threats, and offers two years of ending the Iraq war, according to a transcript released by the US-based SITE Intelligence Group which monitors Islamic militant websites.

THE "NEW" Bin Laden in latest video

"The Crusaders have one aim, and it is necessary for us to weaken the killing and fighting against you," he says.

The second is to do away with the US democratic system of government, which he says merely serves the interests of major corporations.

Bin Laden appears in the video with a retrained beard that is apparently dyed black, hiding the streaks of gray seen in previous footage, and wears a beige cloak over a white robe.

According to Aymen Tamimi, head of the London-based Institute of Islamic Political Thought, the beard dye is a "sign of war." The Algerian Salafi Islamic school to which Bin Laden belongs "considers skin dye only in preparation for war," he said. AFP

Suicide bomb kills 30 in Algeria

ISSER, ALGERIA—ALGERIA WAS ROCKED by its second suicide bomb attack in three days on Saturday when a blast ripped through a naval barracks, with an al-Qaida affiliate later claiming responsibility for the blast that killed at least 30 people.

The north African branch of al-Qaida claimed responsibility for that attack and Thursday's apparent assassination attempt on President Abdelaziz Bouteflika in the eastern city of Batna. Al-Jazeera television reported Saturday citing a statement posted on the Internet from the group.

Most who died in Saturday's blast in the port town of Dellys, 70 km east of Algiers, were members of the coast guard. But the interior ministry said three civilians also died and many of the 47 wounded were also civilians.

On Thursday, 22 people were killed and more than 100 wounded when a man exploded a device in a crowd waiting to meet Bouteflika in Batna. AFP

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Edna Laurence B. Guerra

Pope blasts 'selfish' Europeans for not having enough children

POPE Benedict XVI celebrates Mass on Sunday in Vienna. The Pope is on a three-day visit to Austria. AP

MARIAZELL, AUSTRIA—POPE Benedict XVI blasted Europeans for being selfish and not having enough children, in a sermon on Saturday at the 850-year-old pilgrimage site of Mariazell in Austria.

"Europe has become child-poor. We want everything for ourselves and place little trust in the future," the Pope told a crowd of faithful from his canopied seat at an open-air, altar-mass Mass that took place under heavy rain.

Pope Benedict held out hope, saying: "The earth will be dispelled of a Vatican myth (when the rays of the human heart and of reason illuminated by the heart are extinguished ... Where God is, there is the future."

The Pontiff had chastised other Europeans arriving in Austria Friday as the "very opposite" of human rights.

"The fundamental human rights, the prerogative position of every other right, is the right to life itself," he told members of the government and the diplomatic corps at the Hofburg, the seat of the Austrian presidency in Vienna.

Austria's Defense Minister Norbert Darabos said in a news television interview however Saturday that the Austrian government would not call for a change in the country's law which allows abortion.

Meanwhile, in evening prayers at Mariazell the traditionalist Pope dedicated chants to vice religious orders so as to urge them to become "beacons and women of hope."

Celibacy is not "a flight from existence or a life of isolation," he priests, nuns and other religious orders but "unreservedly" serving God and having "deep relationships ... which they accept as a gift."

The Austrian Church has been wracked in recent era scandals involving priests and in an open letter to the Pope the liberal Austrian movement *Wir sind Kirche* ("We are the Church") has called for the end of celibacy. AFP

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WORLDBRIEFS

Portuguese police allow Maddie's parents to return home

MAO, Portugal—The parents of missing British girl Madeleine McCann were told Saturday by Portuguese police and charged with obstructing the inquiry to make themselves available for interviews. What was thought that Gerry and Kate McCann had put plans to return to Britain on hold after being named as suspects, or that not suspects in their daughter's disappearance by police on Friday. But investigators finally said they could that they had changed their minds after they were given the green light to go home by Portuguese authorities. The couple's daughter Madeleine, who would now be aged 4, disappeared from their holiday apartment in the resort of Praia da Luz on May 3 as the evening meal with friends at a tapas bar and nearby. The McCanns, both doctors and aged 39, have based themselves in the resort ever since, launching a high-profile worldwide appeal for her return which attracted support from figures including Pope Benedict XVI and footballer David Beckham. In recent days, though, both faced mounting questioning by police over a week and their MEQ and Britain's Sunday Mirror newspaper that officers had tried to get questioner to confess to accidentally killing her daughter.

AAP

Afghan suicide bombings rise, UN report shows

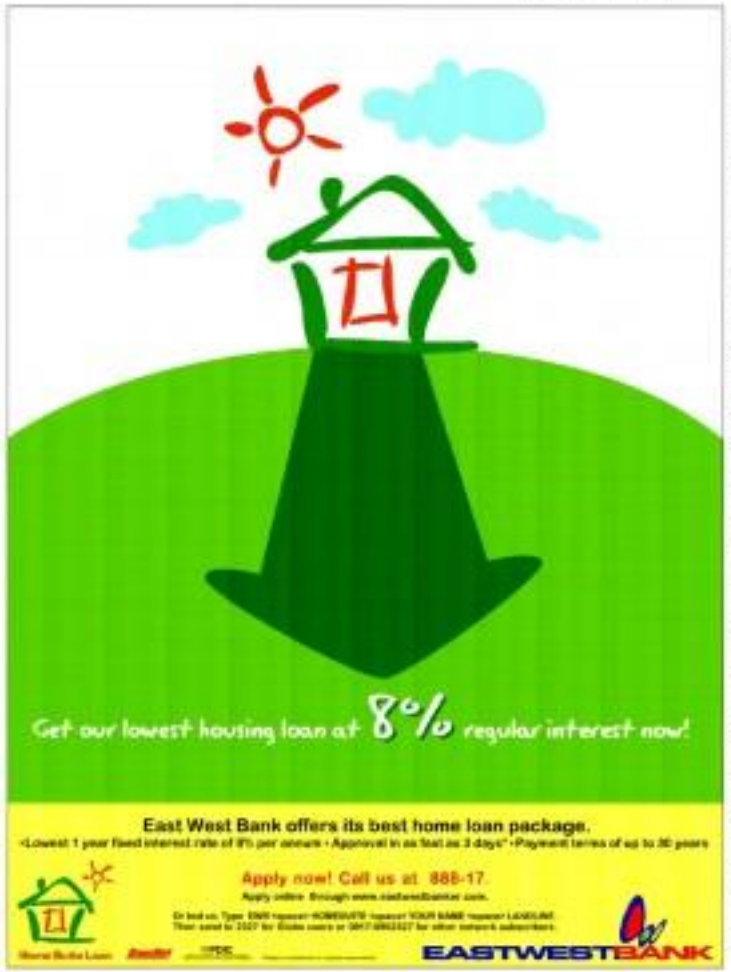
KABUL, Afghanistan—Taliban insurgents carried out 103 suicide bombings in Afghanistan in the first eight months of 2007, a UN panel said Monday, more than double the number for the same period last year, according to a UN report that is expected to be issued publicly on Monday (Tuesday in Manila). The report said there were 41 attacks in which more than 200 people, 68 percent of them civilians. The report also found an increase that suicide bombing technology was migrating from Iraq to Afghanistan, a major fear of Afghan and Allied war officials. Still, the statistics showed that Afghanistan remained the world's second-highest number of suicide attacks in 2006, and so far in 2007, according to Mohammad M. Mofizi, a visiting political science professor at the University of Missouri (Kansas City), who tracks suicide bombings. Afghanistan took only Iraq, where 288 suicide bombings were carried out from January through late July, he said.

NYT

FBI data mining reached beyond target suspects

ALEXANDRIA—The FBI sent a more broader net in its first data investigations than it has previously acknowledged by relying on telecommunications companies to analyze phone, call and e-mail patterns of the associates of those it says who had some private connection, according to newly obtained internal records. The documents indicate that the FBI could send demands for records to obtain the to not only on the person it was the getting but also details on his or her "community of interest"—the network of people that the target person was in contact with. The FBI recently stopped the practice it said because of broad or questions raised about the aggressive use of the records demands, which are known can be issued secretly. In the U.S. officials said on Friday after being asked about it.

NYT



SPORTS

Eagles nip Archers in the nick of time

PACKED again in the lottery, the Arrowin Cabezon makes it to the Top 8 round, 15,000 fans, there to see Alvarez beat Ly Sotto a second time

By Jasmine N. Paya

THE HEATED MATCH CALLED FOR ANOTHER review of the tapes.

Archers

Chris Tiu buried a triple with 17.6 seconds left and the Eagles

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SUZUKI
Way of Life!

Eagles nip Archers anew

From page A19

turned back the Archers with a slim 89-87 triumph to claim a share of second place in the UAAP men's basketball tournament yesterday at the jampacked Araneta Coliseum.

It took several minutes before the Eagles savored their elusive seventh round-wrap of the Archers.

Jino Manabat seemingly beat the buzzer with a putback off Jb Cuntz's missed jumper to forge an extra period. But a tape review of the commissioner shot showed that Manabat failed to release the ball on time expired.

"At least with this win, people recognize more that, no, we're not much better than them, but on those two particular nights we're much better than them," said coach Chot Reyes of the attack, who emotionally punched the air for emphasis after the ordeal. The comeback victory officially marooned the nine to dreams.

The rivalry between the two schools turned overcurrent bitter this season after the Archers played under protest their first-round fate, 80-77 in overtime, to the Eagles.

It took a trade bolt to league officials Judged the Archers' complaint and ruled that the Eagles did use violate a league rule on foreign players.

"I thought we were the first game and a lot of people questioned that because of the protest," said Black, whose Eagles ruled the Archers in second place at 9-4.

The nine, the Eagle played catch up in the second half as Tin hit 13 of his 19 points in the closing quarters.

Pott Enriquez also delivered the big shots off the bench, including back-to-back triples that sparked the Eagles' comeback from a 13-point deficit, 38-51, early in the third period.

Jerry Cruz kept the defending champions in the hunt with 24 points, 18 rebounds and two blocks.

Before Tin's game-winning shot, the owner-shooting guard had also nailed three triples... the third pushing Ateneo outfits 63-59 late in the third quarter.

An Eric Salamat triple and back-to-back buckets by Arbe Mendoza then gave the Eagles their first lead, 66-65, since the opening game.

But the Archers pulled away again with a 9-0 run for a 75-66 edge before Fort Bonifacio and Salamat rallied to knot the contest at 75.

JC Cuntz responded for the Archers in the final two minutes, firing five straight points to give the Archers their last point of the last, 87-86, with 50.6 ticks left.

And the Archers seemed headed for the series sweep, as Nonoy Baclao missed the ball over to the Eagles' next possession, before Tin came to Ateneo's rescue.

AS La Salle coach Franz Pumaren (right) signals a defensive play, Ateneo's Enrico Mendoza (dive to drive past the Archers' Buster Maloles and Perlito Pilosanto (left) in yesterday's game. ALBERT DEL ROSA

STANDINGS	W	L
DLSU	11	1
ADMU	9	4
LA SALLE	9	4
UP	8	5
FEU	7	6
NU	5	7
UST	5	7
ADAMSON	3	9
UE	2	10
BENILDE	0	12

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m. — Ateneo vs. La Salle
(Rematch)
4:15 p.m. — UST vs. UP
(Loss of the Lions)

2 more cagers with Filipino roots seeking SEAG berths

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE PHILIPPINE TEAM CONTINUES TO get a boost from the international pipeline.

Two more homegrown players with Filipino roots are hoping to land slots in the all-amateur squad that will see action in the Thailand Southeast Asian Games in December.

Hi-American Kevin Dalido and Fil-Jordan Amir Mustafa will try out for the team when it convenes training at 11 a.m. today at the Rizal Coliseum.

Dalido, 6-6 from 2 guard, played for the Vanguard University of Southern California.

The 5-foot-11 Mustafa, who averaged 5 points, 2 rebounds and 1 assist for the University of Indianola in Thousand Oaks, California.

Mustafa set a single-game record of 17 points and averaged more than nine-a-game for his school. The 22-year-old super also averaged 24.6 points to earn a spot in the first team of the Southern California Inter-Collegiate Athletic Conference.

His late father Mohmood, a 6-foot-1 guard, earlier expressed interest to don the national colors again after playing for the then Philippine Air squad in the Thai-Asia championship in Yokohama, Japan, last July.

"With the departure of most top PBL players to the pro ranks, we really need to beef up our team," said Milan Romero, Barbecue Centre owner and SEAG project manager. "If they're really good, then we will take them."

Only Junior Cuarto, PBL back-to-back Most Valuable Player, and 6-foot-4 center Ilram Bolgar are assured of slots to the national team announced by Jamel Bautista.

Former Purefoods point guard Jhaps Kidanemariam of the Northport of Toyota Batteaside are also expected to join the reunion.

Meanwhile, the PBL has set a Sept. 20 deadline for the submission of rookie draft applications. The draft is slated Sept. 22.

Change of Fortune for 'new' Viloria

EDDIE FLORES JR. | AUGUST 31

weight champ Brian Viloria to be a former fighter with former Manny Pacquiao conditioning coach Justin Fortune now handling his training as the bout for Grand Gym in Los Angeles.

Viloria confirmed Fortune's new role yesterday as he pursues his bid to get back to the ring this November.

"Brian looked a little big, he must be walking around 125 lbs," said a source who sees Viloria at the gym Saturday.

"He said he plans to compete in the 112 lbs division, depending on who he will be fighting."

Meanwhile, Fortune said he will likes Pacquiao's chances against Marco Antonio Barrera when they meet again on Oct. 6 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

"I know Manny pretty well, and he will go for the kill," Fortune was quoted as saying by the source.

Fortune, however was not impressed at all by Pacquiao's decision to train in the Philippines, saying that "there's no such distraction there."

Inferno 2, Lagumbay, Centerfielder

October 2007 Calendar Offerings

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(BY JOSIAH GO)

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Roach, Rivera confirm Pacquiao 'hidden' weapon

LOS ANGELES—IT WOULD BE TROUBLE enough if Marco Antonio Barrera to fell himself prepared for a run-limed roller coaster in his next fight.

Manny Pacquiao, a murderer southpaw, may indeed throw more right hands come Saturday, Oct. 6 in Las Vegas. But if Barrera bothers to pay his own abroad nose closer to the video screen, he would discover that the broadest right hand was already there when Pacquiao ran him over in November 2003.

If in doubt, Barrera could go send one assistant to the 9900 Card gym here where there's a yellowish full newspaper page pasted on the right wall, immediately after the door, detailing the gory geometry of the right hand Pacquiao crafted to turn first one counter in Texas.

It's, of course, unclear whether the Pacquiao right shot came in the form of a hook or a jab, but the impact of the blow pitifully distorted Barrera's handsome profile beyond recognition.

* * *

That said, we take this opportunity to inform Arbor Barrera he should start preparing for a Pacquiao hidden weapon.

We, ourselves, This one that ultimately opened the door to Barrera's lamentable defeat four years ago is not exactly correct.

But if it chooses to own like a cupcake's, a fleeting midnight blade landing like a lightning bolt, it's because of the thumb last Barrera et al had nevertheless.

Instead of Pacquiao's over-hyped new shot—the right hook, which had at one time been associated with the shoulder Manilla boy—Barrera should come ready to duck the big Jab.

Whether Barrera likes it or not, he will be standing up before a two-handed upbeat in Pacquiao.

It's, of course, hard to tell whether that shoot would complete the devastation or dissipate, about given Pacquiao's ominous running regimen that saw him holding perfect Wild Card to dong-town three burning at home.

* * *

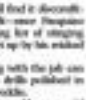
Anyway, credit for exposing the hidden Pacquiao weapon goes to Arbor Barrera who, sending for Boxing News, sent off the hunt to come to give The Job to tightful place in the Street Solomon.

While there's been as much emphasis on Pacquiao's power punches in recent times, it's the simpler and subtle things in his arsenal that truly make him special. ... It's literally how soon at the highest levels of boxing, the simplest punch is still and will always be the most important."

Touché.

Now, let's roll to the irresistible Hermie Rivera, who fondly needs no introduction from his longtime pen-to-Arbor Jose, in the process confirming how trainer Freddie Roach had also given credit to Pacquiao's phantom jab.

Bare Eye



Recah Trinidad

* * *

"If Manny starts out with his usual time of non-stop pounding, then a decisioned evening is in store for Marco who's on a grind himself traveling his best off of a Guadalajara gym.

"Midway into their unbeaten weekends, I still can't see how Barrera can navigate his familiar Jab Question. Unless he has grown a third arm and a leg to boot.

"Buoyed by the expert handling of Freddie Roach and Bobby Bernardez, the southpaw terror is on track to reassert his dominance of the Mexican three-time champ.

"If Not, Barrera will find it discomfiting—at worst difficult—since Pacquiao opens up with his long, lot of stinging hooks and straights set up by his wicked jabs.

"Two fighter leading with the jab can execute the heaviest shells published in The notebook," says Freddie.

"You can bet the house Marco would be looking for ways to surprise Manny in their re-acquaintance identity.

"Manny's powerful strikes hurt Marco in their first encounter, forcing his backside to stop it in the 11th round.

"He was angered repeatedly by solid shots unleashed without let up by the 05-pinoy crackerjack.

"This time, expect Marco to seek desperate means to clear out an opaque over his hard-hitting rival.

"In the current mark plan, Barrera must engage Pacquiao early and attack away at every move to exact maximum damage—else he'll be in pastiche posthaste.

"Ironically, a distant cousin avatar Marco's stalled drive to stem a few dogfits...as avid mini-sidekicked by his 114-pound colleague at San Antonio's Alamodome.

"If Barrera gets blown out again, maybe he can seek solace in the accustomed defense of his future clients. Against Marco—their defenselessness.

"While Barrera was consistent in winning most of his fights, there's something about that he must do but didn't in their first war.

"He must avoid standing in front of Manny and getting an abundance of heavy jabs sans the obligatory counterpoint. I'm sure Barrera's handlers know about this little gaffe by now.

"Marco must also worry, or a healthy Pacquiao and this season Dot Pinoy mangler is all set to repeat his enthralling swapping-of-the-resignance-making Barrera."

Henin bags US Open title

Parker saws France past Germany

PARIS (AP) — LITHUANIA MEETS SERBIA

Parker saws France past Germany

Joakim Noah scored 16 points and Tony Parker added 15 as France defeated Germany, 76-66, winning bronze for coach Pierre Vincent in his first major tournament.

Noah and Parker led Sunday's win, which improved the French to 4-0 in the tournament. Germany fell to 3-1.

Dirk Nowitzki had 17 points and 10 rebounds for Germany, which was playing without Chris Kaman, who was sick.

Parker, who had 15 points and seven assists, was named to the All-Tournament team along with Nowitzki, Noah and Serbia's Milos Teodosic.

Lithuania beat Serbia and Montenegro, 78-74, in the other semifinal.

Jonas Maciulis led Lithuania with 20 points, while Teodosic had 19 for Serbia and Montenegro.

Lithuania will play Spain in the championship game Monday. Spain beat Greece, 75-70, in the other semifinal.

Greece will play Germany in the bronze medal game.

PARKER

A-Rod scores milestone

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) — ALEX RODRIGUEZ HITS 500th and 501st home runs of the season as Yankees defeat the Royals, 11-6.

Rodriguez, an 11-time All-Star, produced his eighth multi-homer game of the season and became the first Yankee player to eclipse the 500 career mark since Reggie Jackson and Mickey Mantle both accomplished the feat in 1961.

Bobby Abreu also was on the third baseman, who's now the major league record. Mike Schmidt did it for the Philadelphia Phillies in 1980 and Adrian Beltre matched it in 2004 with the Los Angeles Dodgers. AFP

Alicepo takes Monza pole

MONZA, Italy — FERNANDO ALONSO TOOK A

Alicepo takes Monza pole

MONZA, Italy — FERNANDO ALONSO TOOK A record on the Italian Saturday, clinching pole position on qualifying for this weekend's Italian Grand Prix.

Alonso's teammate Lewis Hamilton was second, giving McLaren the top two starting spots for the fifth time in 11 races. AP

ALONSO

NEW YORK — TOP-SEEDED Justine Henin capped a dominant run and overwhelmed No. 4 Svetlana Kuznetsova, 6-1, 6-3, Saturday night to win her second US Open title and seventh major championship overall.

Henin, who also won the 2003 Open, did not drop a set all tournament and became the first woman to win a United States after beating both Williams sisters along the way.

"I had two amazing weeks," Henin said, "and played my best tennis."

The only help Henin needed was when she got a brutal Jessica complaint from while she climbed into the stands to greet her coach after the match ended.

Kuznetsova matched the fewest number of games for a US Open women's runner-up to the past 21 years, making Henin work for less than 1 1/2 hours.

"I hope to be back with a better game in the final next time," the Russian said, praising her opponent for "an unbelievable tournament."

It was reminiscent of some of Henin's past runs in major finals, including dropping just three games to Ann Frances while winning a third consecutive French Open title in June, and beating two games to Mary Pierce at Roland Garros in 2005.

The victory gave Henin her second major title of the year and a four-leading seven titles

HENIN

which going 50-4 at 11 tournaments. Against Kuznetsova, Henin finished with a 23-11 edge in winners and saved all six break points she faced, including three in the final game.

She showed off all aspects of her versatile game, from volleys—winning the point on 13 of 16 trips to the net—to passing shots on the run to returns of serve, punctuating most with shouts of "Allez!"

Henin missed her finish-line backhand on the match's first two points, then went to work, taking nine of the next 13 points while going up 4-0. Even when she faltered, double-faulting twice in a row at 5-0, she recovered to hold, throwing herself into a 127 kph (120 mph) service winner and a 108 kph (98 mph) crosscourt serve ace.

Henin ended any debate over who would be the player of the year by adding a second US Open title to the fourth French Open championship she earned in June, overseeing a year that began with both a divorce and a reconciliation with her family.

"I'm just feeling happy. And the fact that I have my family back to my life helps a lot," the world number one added. "They give me a lot of support. I'm feeling in peace with myself and that's a very important feeling for me."

"Not a lot of people thought I could win this Open with the draw I had and I did. It's amazing for me," Henin said. "I hope I can keep a lot of confidence from this tournament. Beating Venus and Serena and winning today, this way, this gives me a lot of confidence." AP, AFP

Men's final: Federer vs Djokovic

NEW YORK — ROGER FEDERER secured a record-tying seventh straight US Open title, beating No. 4 Nikolay Davydenko 7-5, 6-1, 7-5, Saturday to snatch his winning streak at Flushing Meadows to 20 matches.

Federer, who will be seeking to become the first man to take four consecutive US championships since Bill Tilden in 1925, will face No. 3 Novak Djokovic, who earlier Saturday overcame the late summer heat and humidity of New York City to beat 13th-seeded David Ferrer, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3.

"This obvious was well-prepared for the majors. Shows what it takes," Federer said. "When this second week comes around, I play my best."

In Sunday's championship match, Federer will have the only man to beat him over the past three months.

"I guess the best player of the summer are in the final," said Federer, all two weeks that he lost to Djokovic at a hard-court event in Montreal in early August.

That was Djokovic's big breakthrough; he also beat Rafael Nadal and Andy Roddick there, becoming the first man in 13 years to beat Slam, 1-3 in the rankings or a single tournament.

FEDERER

DJOKOVIC

AP

Stricker, Baddeley share lead; Tiger still 1 down

LEMONT, ILLINOIS — STEVE STRICKER EARNED the night's lead to keep pace with Tiger Woods, then surged ahead with birdie chances on every hole to a round of 7 under 64 Saturday that left him tied with Aaron Baddeley in the $8.35M Chrysler Championship.

Baddeley finished his third two holes for a 66 that allowed him to join Stricker at 13-under 130 and take to the final group.

Stricker, who won the first of the US PGA Tour's "playoffs" at the Reno-Tahoe Open for his first victory in 6-1/2 years, is in position to take a commanding lead in the chase for the FedEx Cup, with bonuses in the almost-$10 million bonus pool for the Tour Championship starting next time.

Baddeley, who won in Phoenix earlier this year, was a long-term figure on the back nine even though he was always in range. Three-under a 20-foot birdie putt on the 17th hole, followed by an approach into 5 feet at the last to get into the final group.

Woods never looked more unfazed after a 69 that kept him one stroke off the lead, but he missed only one fairway and two greens, and figured for public feel has been one of his best scores of the year. AP

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Porto stars as STI crushes UM, nears Naascu crown

By Marc Anthony Reyes

STI ENGINEERED OUT AS AN 72-DEFENSE star of University of Manila Saturday night to move to within a victory of dismissing the Manila-based Red Warriors in the Athletic Colleges and Universities (Naascu) men's basketball championship at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Rachil Porto, a starting guard last season reduces playing time dwindled with the arrival of new recruits, picked a fifty-strong moment to shine when he unloaded 25 points to key the Scorpions' victory in the most of the first of the two-game series.

The win put STI on the threshold of its first ever title after finishing second to fallen defending champion 40th last year.

"We are closer to the goal but we can't just count STI out," said STI coach Vic Yvonnes. "We need to remain focused till the finish."

Porto scored most of his points in the second quarter where the Scorpions huddled down to work after the Heroes had clinched the pace to take a 20-14 lead at the end of the first period.

While STI concentrated on guards Dexter Macatiwa, Raymond Bongco, Mark Belong and Howard Tan, Porto caught fire with his jumpers and fast-break plays.

Tongco, one of the three big acquisitions from other leagues, still managed to score 16 points. Abbi Macatiwa finished with nine markers. Belong and Tan stayed below the double figure and ended up scoring seven and six points, respectively.

The Heroes, back in the finals after a year's absence, tried to fight back through Patrick Gomez, Dondee Magno and Ronnie Amanecio but Chico was no stopping this time as points, who ended the game with a 24-point scoring outburst in the fourth quarter.

Jay Valentino poured in 26 points on top of 16 rebounds as Centro Escolar unchained 69th, 79-62, to clinch the season's title in the second game. Valentino bagged the MVP trophy.

St. Clare handed Ian Roy Ultimo, Aries Pumaren and Nino Rallos to cast back five-time defending champion University of Manila, 69-76, and capture the junior championship.

SPORTSWATCH

Davis Cup team at PSA Forum

MEMBERS AND RIVALS OF THE RP DAVIS Cup team, the coming fourth leg of the Manila National Television Grand Prix and Games and Amusements Board (SMB) show it to Rizal, 9-1-91 giving the public a chance to see the PSA. Forum Tuesday at the Binibini Villa Avenue branch. The Davis Cup team will showcase its drawn against Kuwait at their coming Davis Cup tie in Sept. 21-23 in Kuwait. Amid the star-studded Davis Radio 91.9 and sponsored by Binibini Gold Region, the weekly forum starts at 10:30 a.m.

SJC stakes P2-M prize

ROLLED TWO P2 MILLION IN GUARANTEED prize awaits the runners of the SJC 2nd Anniversary 6-Medalists' Golf to be San Juan Country Club. Three-day weekend will be hosted by SJC Director Rodolfo Pineda and backed up by Singapore Consolidated Steel. Entry fee is P10,000. An

improvement of defending champions will see some likely among them Gary Ramos, Juan Mendoza, William Sr., Mike Sturo Jay, Gerry "Boy" Fajardo, Bo Mario Kalaw Tanquedo, Ching Alex Cruz, Eric de Vera, defending title Patrick dalmeo, Pol Dalmeo, Bingo Lee, Danny Ty, Ludwig Sandoval, Sonny Lagos, Mayo Buddy Dalmeo and Rio Salcedo, among others. For more inquiries, please call 725-0309 and 725-6583.

Staglest championship round on

A HEAD SCRAMBLE FOR THE TITLE LOOMS today when the championship round of Ting Pedal 9-day derby gets under way at Bridgeo Mega Cockpit. Twenty-two participants with two cocks each will test the qualifiers among them Gerry Santos, Pet Dayo, Dong Lorenzo, Joe de Castro, Daniel Arsenio, Wen Tan, Jo Badillo, Omar Redongo, Rolven Bahalla, Mickey Dionisio, Rod Bautista, Bebot Reyes and Ricky Pelaez. Total guaranteed purse is P1.2 million. Meanwhile, Hotpoint Re Entry Free Fighter Main Event Cock "Zeke" return on Sept. 16 with P100,000 at stake. A total of 40 entries were registered last Aug. 28. For inquiries, call 893-2276 and 8162982.

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MEDALLO HIGHLIGHTS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER SPORTS, SEPTEMBER 10, 2007 PAGE A23

SPORTS

NAGA MILO MARATHON

Peñalosa, Morillo show 'em

NAGA CITY, CAMARINES SUR—A FAMILIAR sight and an inspiring burden ruled the Naga qualifier of the 31st National Milo Marathon yesterday.

Franklin Peñalosa and Adamson University education graduate Alyn Morillo won P150,000 each and advanced to the 42K grand finals set Nov. 18 in Manila.

The 30-year-old Peñalosa overcame late opposition to finish the 21.1-kilometer race in 1 hour, 13 minutes and 44 seconds.

Morillo beat 19-year-old Mary Grace Guilas of Daet, Camarines Norte, who clocked 1:15:37, Leandro Andrasen of Pili, Camarines Sur, was third in 1:20:22.

Peñalosa, who bags an 11 pegward haul for Daet," said Peñalosa, who hails from the city where his father trains clients.

Peñalosa placed fourth in last year's race won by Antonio Muñoz, 23, of Iba, Zambales.

Muñoz clocked in second this time at 1:17:51, followed by Jerry Rey Carreon in 1:18.16. They won P75,000 and P50,000, respectively.

"Pinush lang talaga para makita if I need to run other than but he was there," said Muñoz, a senior criminology student at the University of Northeastern Philippines in Iriga City.

The second and third placers likewise made it to the grand finals.

A total of 4,500 runners from 19 provinces in the Bicol region answered the 6 a.m. starting gun fired by Naga City Sports Council president Peter Lee and assisted by Bf Gov Oscar Mike events executive director and regional sales manager Arlyn de Jesus.

Needless skill to allow previous for the logistics leg on Sunday 3rd or the entire gone to San Pablo City on Sept 23.

PEÑALOSA

Girlstown tops Little Olympics

SCHOOL OF MARVELOUS SPORTS, hosted by its victories in football and sepak takraw, swimmed The high-school overall championship at the close of the 2007 Mini Little Olympics yesterday at the Manila Sports Park.

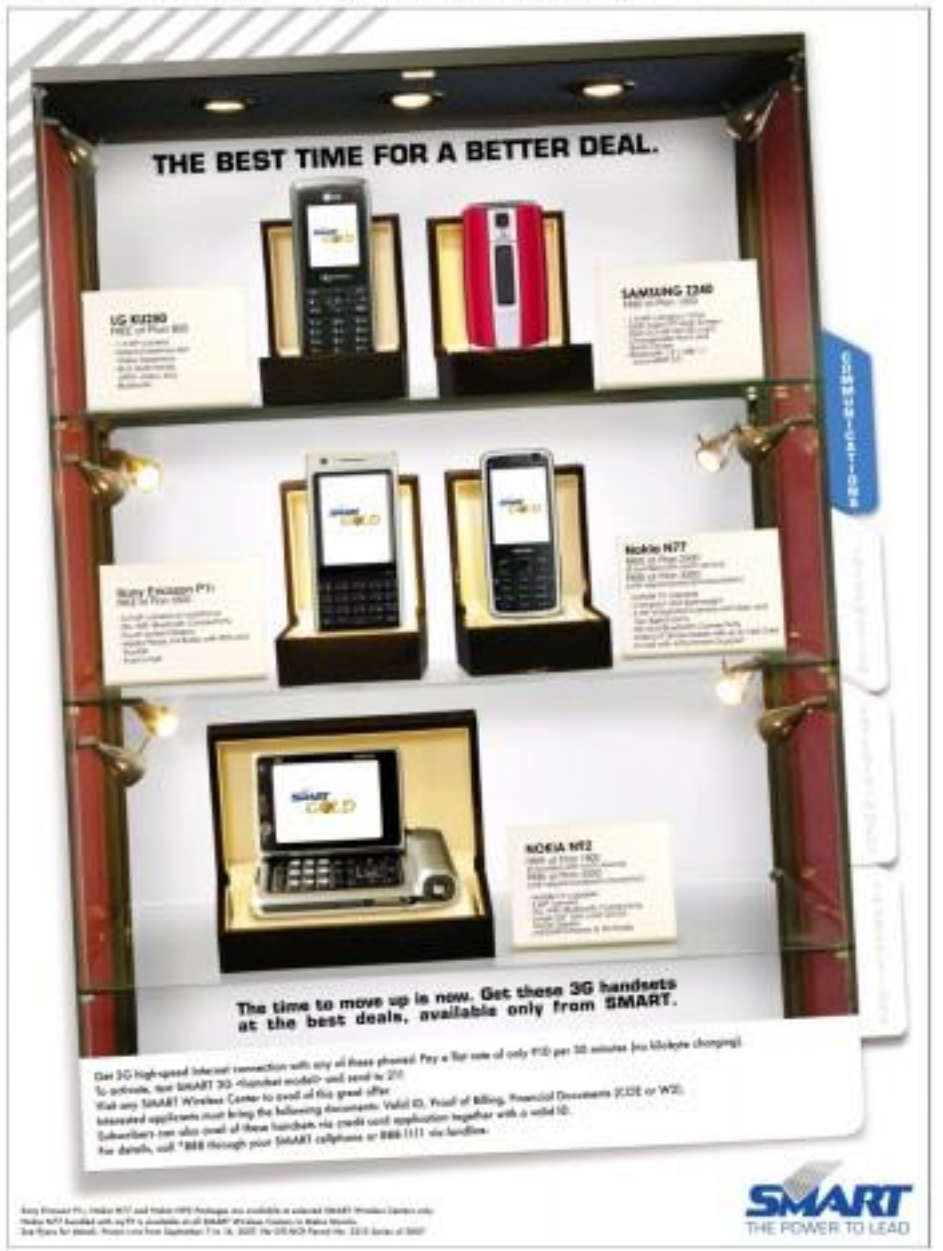
The Cavite-based Girlstown won the title with 15 gold, 6 silver and 4 bronze medals for their 19th title in 20 years.

Deposed champion Alabel Regional could only muster bronze medals in football and sepak takraw and placed second to the other school with a 13-9-3 output.

Sports equipment worth P40,000 and a trophy await the champions during the formal awarding ceremonies on Sept. 15 at the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

Runnerers will receive P10,000 worth of sports gear and a trophy.

In the elementary level, AC Homes (6) (3-3-7), overtook St. Paul Pasig (3-7-5) and then overhauled Leader Valenzuela Central (3-5-4-2). Pending the final results in badminton and beach tennis, however, no winner could be declared yet.



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Business Mirror

Gov't defers sale of SMC, Meralco stakes

Move due to unfavorable market conditions

By Michelle V. Ramos

AS CONCERNS OVER THE US SUBPRIME MARKET crisis spilled over to the local equities market, the national government has moved the sale of its stakes in Manila Electric Co. and San Miguel Corp. to 2008.

Despite the delay, the Department of Finance said the government was still poised to exceed its privatization revenue target for this year by more than P50 billion, saying there were still high-value assets in the pipeline for the remainder of the year.

Global equities markets suffered heavy selling in the wake of the credit crunch caused by the worsening US subprime crisis.

Since the subprime woes were magnified in July, Philippine stock prices wiped out the record gains registered in the first half of 2007.

Aside from the unfavorable market conditions, unfinished discussions between the government and various farmers' groups on the use of the proceeds from the sale of the San Miguel stake were delaying its privatization.

Even excluding its 24-percent stake in San Miguel and 12-percent interest in Meralco from this year's privatization program, the DOF said the government was still likely to raise P86.3 billion before the year ends. This would be much higher than the official revenue target of raising P25.6 billion from privatization this year.

Earlier this year, Amanpulo Ltd. in July the government raised P42.9 billion from the sale of its entire 46-percent stake in Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp. (PTIC), a 20-percent interest in Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC), and 6.6 percent holdings in Philippine National Bank, and the old Bohs airport property

GO TO B2

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Bad loan ratio hits post-Asian crisis low of 5.21%

By Doris C. Dumlao

COMMERCIAL BANKS' BAD LOANS FELL TO A new post-Asian crisis low of 5.21 percent of total loans in June as banks intensified efforts to get rid of nonperforming assets, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

The decline in the nonperforming loan ratio from the previous month's 5.39 percent occurred as the decline in nonperforming loans outpaced the slowdown in total loan portfolio, based on the BSP interim released Friday.

The latest NPL ratio is now even closer to the average 5.4 percent seen before the Asian currency crisis of 1997. The banking system's NPL ratio peaked at 18.81 percent in October 2001 as many corporate borrowers defaulted on their debts while banks turned cautious on providing new loans after the Asian turmoil hobbled a sharp currency devaluation and interest rate increases.

The latest BSP report showed that NPLs declined by 2.45 percent to P306.87 billion from the end-May level of P314.69 billion. The coverage ratio for these NPLs was 83.6%, meaning that for every P1 of these bad loans, banks have set aside an average 84 centavos in loan provisions.

The month-on-month decline in the bad loan stock edged out the 0.19-percent decline in total loan portfolio to P5.1 trillion from P5.124 trillion.

But while banks have reduced their NPL burden, their stock of idle real and property assets arising from foreclosures on delinquent mortgages was higher at P143.11 billion. Compared to a month ago, the level fell from P143.11 billion.

Cautious trading seen

TRADING IS LIKELY TO HIT A CAUTIOUS note this week as investors await the verdict on Federal President Joseph Estrada's plunder case and developments in global financial markets, analysts said.

BA Capital Securities' wrote in a weekly report to clients that market players were also waiting for the Sept. 18 meeting of the US Federal Open Market Committee on whether or not to cut its federal funds rate.

Late last week, US Fed Chair Ben Bernanke reassured the markets that he was aware of the current credit turmoil, market volatility, and its potential to undermine the broad economy. This was interpreted by investors as a hint that the Fed will be making a rate cut.

"More data will be needed and many do to will be the US jobs data. If they will announce a low number and a more than six employment rate, then this will add more pressure on the Fed to cut [interest rates]," BA Capital Securities wrote.

Overnight Friday, however, Wall Street shares fell as data showed a surprise decline in US payrolls, the first in four years, fanning fears that the world's biggest economy was slowing.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbled 211.28 points (1.6 percent) to 12,139.07 and the Nasdaq fell 54.25 points (2.08 percent) to 2,552.57. **Alkabell Zenaida Lazaro**

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ATTY. ANTHONY R. AYSON
Corporate Secretary
SECURITY BANK

BIR to audit tax compliance of conglomerates

Agency to check transactions among subsidiaries

By Michelle V. Ramos

HOPING TO PUT MORE TEETH INTO ITS anti-tax evasion drive, the Bureau of Internal Revenue said it would conduct a tax audit on the country's conglomerates.

In a statement, the BIR said its Large Taxpayers Service would consider conglomerates as its top priority in focus audit in the remaining months of the year.

It focus on the audit of conglomerates will achieve a more comprehensive audit on interrelated transactions and possible tax avoidance/evasion schemes being employed intentionally or unintentionally by these entities," the BIR said.

The BIR said revenue authorities, headed by LTS officials Gene Charlie Lim and Bey Ismeria Tandin, began meeting with officials of conglomerates to inform them of the upcoming tax audit.

Last Friday, the BIR representatives met with the comptrollers and finance officers of the 10 top group of companies at the BIR CIRS building in Quezon City. The meeting highlighted the programs of the LTS for the remainder of the year. LTS accounts for about 60 percent of the BIR's total revenue collection.

The BIR said it was set to issue letters of authority (LAs) to revenue officers who will be tasked to conduct tax audits.

The tax collecting agency said that following the tax audit of conglomerates, the BIR's LTS would focus its audit next on the industry basis. The following industries to be prioritized in the audit are: Hospitality, transportation and other related industries; construction, steel industry and real estate development; food and beverage; banking and financial activities; insurance; wholesale and retail; telecommunications, broadcast media and related services; pharmaceuticals, chemicals and related industries; and other miscellaneous services.

Found in the conduct of its tax audits, the BIR has ranked companies screened by the LTS to comply with the requirement of submitting their financial statements and tax returns electronically.

"We are appealing to you to help us more by increasing your tax compliance. Our collection efforts will be a step in the formation of a better environment for business growth and opportunities wherein you, as valued taxpayers, will also be the long term beneficiaries," Lim and Tandin said.

The BIR, the biggest revenue earner among government agencies, is tasked to collect P785 billion this year. The goal is consistent with the government's target of reducing its budget deficit to only P63 billion this year from last year's P96.8 billion.

So far, by half, the BIR recorded a P36.6-billion shortfall in tax collection.

Revenue officials said the BIR met its collection target for July and was likely to have also achieved its goal for August. The agency, however, has to exceed its goals in the remaining months of the year by P50.5 billion to ensure it meets its target for 2007.

Besides requiring the LTS to audit conglomerates and large companies, the BIR also earlier directed revenue district officers nationwide to conduct a massive tax audit on at least 20 percent of taxpayers under their jurisdiction.

Gov't defers sale of SMC ...

From page B1

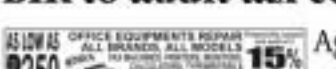
In the remaining months of this year, RAM wants still up for sale are the government's remaining 40-percent stake in PNOC-EDC and the government's property in Fujitsu, Japan.

The government expects to raise P39 billion from the sale of its remaining shares in PNOC-EDC, possibly through the stock market.

Another P5 billion is expected to be raised from the sale of Fujitsu properties.

Finance Secretary Margarita Teves said the government had to surpass the privatization revenue target for this year to make up for the shortfall in tax collection.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, the two biggest revenue earners for the government, both fell short of their targets in the first half. There combined shortfall stood at about P12 billion.



UBS bullish on RP banks, sees more mergers

By Dvell C. Dariba

BSP to advise on Philippine banks due to advisory work leading to better asset quality, loan growth and consolidation efforts

In a briefing last Friday, UBS Securities Philippines Inc. research director Mindi Olsson projected that bank lending in the Philippines could grow by 9-10 percent this year, up from last year's modest result.

"Banks right now, being very liquid, are really motivated to meet the credit upswing," she said.

On the economic front, she said interest rates would remain low.

"While interest rates might have bottomed, it's still supportive of potential growth in credit demand," she said. "If you look at the second quarter GDP (gross domestic product) result, it seems that the macroeconomy is growing much faster than expected, which is also supportive of the banking sector in general."

She added that banks' stock of bad loans had gone down to manageable levels and even show room for pre-basis crisis levels.

"And in improved property prices are helping bankers get rid of their foreclosed assets. So bond issuers in choosing up their asset portfolio," she said.

The analyst also cited evidence of recovery in loan demand, notably via consumer credit as consumers proceed to leverage to leverage to purchase a house or a car.

She said an annual consumer credit growth of 20 percent appeared unattainable.

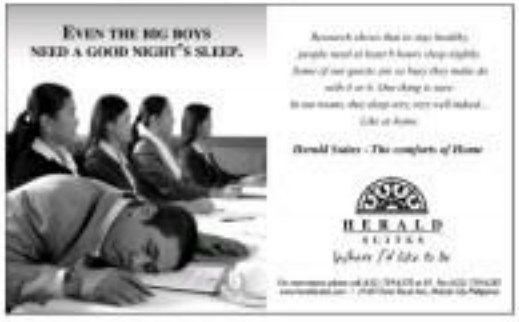
"Going forward, we see big infrastructure spending to support a more broad-based growth in loans and improved business confidence to support a resumption in middle-market credit demand," she said.

Bangko sentral supervisor (SMAs) were likewise seen to be more "value enhancing" this time compared to the early 2000s when the banking system's bad loans peaked following the Asian crisis of 1997.

She said banks' books were also cleaner and there's much better disclosure with the shift to international accounting standards.

Olsson said there was still room for the big three—Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Bank of the Philippine Islands and Banco de Oro—to acquire other banks.

"But I think the focus now is not so much on acquiring to be big but the acquisition they're looking now is to banks with a certain specific niche," she said.



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Those ubiquitous Chinese loans

WITH A ZOOMING economy and about a trillion dollars in foreign reserves accumulated over years of trade surpluses, China seems to be loaning money left and right, whether to Asia, Africa or Latin America. And depending on who is telling, these loans can help and rub mixed feelings of suspicion, concern, appreciation and gratitude.

No Free Lunch

Carlos Bulatao

African onslaught

In Africa, there is concern over how Chinese companies are accumulating new debt—losing led into a new debt trap, as noted out by some critics...just as it is emerging from decades of heavy indebtedness on generous debt relief packages from traditional creditor countries in the West.

Last year, Beijing hosted the largest gathering of foreign leaders ever by China, when it hosted the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which took place Nov. 4-5, 2006, attended 48 African delegations, most of them led by heads of state. The Chinese government used the occasion to unveil a huge $5-billion trade and aid loan package aimed at cementing a "strategic partnership" with Africa. The package reportedly led China to double its 2006 assistance to the continent within three years. The loan offers also opened its doors China double their trade from $40 billion in 2005 to $100 billion by 2010. A $5-billion China-Africa development Fund was also set up to support Chinese companies investing in Africa.

Latin American outreach

Halfway around the globe in Latin America, China's rapidly growing presence is being eyed with great scrutiny by the US government, which sees the former's political-economic agenda to flout violently as some kind of a threat to the "hard-won progress toward representative democracy" of their south neighbors.

The US State Department has also questioned whether Chinese investments truly benefit the region. They point out that substantial investments in the region are typically accompanied and facilitated by cheap government-to-government loans that require work to be done by Chinese companies. Furthermore, they observe that investments to date heavily on extracting raw materials rather than providing jobs and opportunities for workers to build skills. The Statement also see the Taiwan factor to the Chinese initiative to their neighborhood, noting how Dominica and Grenada broke ties with Taiwan in favor of China, while Panama opened an embassy in Beijing, as other China pledged assistance to these countries.

Funding favorite

Closer to home, China has been quite forthcoming in granting soft loans to its Asian neighbors, including the country's southeast neighbor with which it shares common borders. In recent years, the projects funded by these loans will clearly benefit both donor and donee. In the case of China, its projects in its immediate neighbors are seen to facilitate the movement of natural resources from its periphery to its industrialized center to sustain its double-digit economic growth.

The current talk of the town in the Philippines are projects funded or to be funded by such soft loans from China, including the infamous ZTE National Broadband Network project, the Data Education Project, the Manila-North Railway Project, the Subway Project, south projects, and a host of others. Suddenly Chinese loans have become a favorite financing source for all sorts of government projects. Why such a turn over Chinese loans?

No conditionalities

For the government to picture, the loans from China are a welcome alternative to more expensive loans from the traditional lending agencies such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, which charge around 7 percent annual interest on their loans, against China's 3 percent. For the other holders of the Chinese loans that government borrowers like, whether in the Philippines or in the other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, is the absence of various conditionalities normally imposed by the traditional lenders. Chinese money is usually not linked to conditions for various or several standards or community standards, or subject to strict criteria on corruption, but have become regular features of WB and ADB loans. It is not clear, though, whether absence of such conditionalities leads to superior project outcomes.

Tied loans

While there may be no difficult conditionalities tied to the Chinese loans, the loans are tied in another crucial way. The loans require the use of Chinese suppliers and contractors. The problem of tying loans to the use of country suppliers has long been condemned by multilateral donors, who now prescribe for international competitive bidding of loan-funded projects to ensure that the borrower can obtain the best value for money

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300	2,340.00	1,809.00	19,280.00	18,540.00
400	3,060.00	2,433.00	31,110.00	24,726.00
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More 'action' seen with PSE's short-selling rules

By Dinah S. Lucas

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN THE late 1920s, there has only been one legal way of making money on the local bourse. That is, "buy low and sell high."

At early or mid-month, however, the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) is set to introduce rules that would basically dictate on its head, allowing market participants to legally profit from price declines.

The scheme, called short-selling, falls under the PSE's newly approved securities borrowing and lending (SBL) program, and will legalize a practice that has long been the exclusive purview of only the most hardcore of punters.

Short-selling refers to the sale of any security that the seller does not own, on to a seller that will be settled by borrowed securities.

An example of a short sale occurs when a person sells at a higher price a stock that he does not own. He settles that transaction by buying the same stock at a lower price for delivery to the buyer who earlier bought it at a higher price.

The difference between the higher selling price and the lower buying price represents the profit of the short seller.

Lingering concerns

There are, however, lingering concerns about introducing a system that would certainly help traders depress market prices on the stock exchange. After all, the broad sentiment continues to favor a rising market, and anyone seen going against the market is often viewed as a "party pooper" or "killjoy."

Others also point to the fact that one of the biggest scandals to hit the PSE—the collapse of then-market darling SSI Investments Corp.—was directly attributable to massive short-selling activities by a few brokers, which caused widespread market panic.

Lingering concerns

"It is difficult enough to push the market up, without having to contend with people who want to push stock prices down," said one trader, when asked about his views on short-selling.

Not wanting to be chastised over conducting official policy, the trader said there were lingering concerns that some speculative market players could use this scheme to profit from bad news, or worse, spread false rumors about listed firms and profit from the market's adverse reaction.

Indeed, the idea of legalized short-selling has taken a long time to catch on in the Philippines.

One of the earliest ideas for SBL was just revealed in a proposal by the Investment Houses Association of the Philippines in the mid-1990s, originally meant to help holders of governmental and corporate bonds profit from their idle securities, by loaning them out to short-sellers who are willing for them to do so.

The revised incentive means government officials have taking off lovefests with the idea from taking off, however, until recently, when a broader lobby from capital market advocates helped convince the government to resurrect SBL as mainstream theorem.

"Overall, this would be good for the market," said Grace Ouline principal Emmanuel Rufino in an interview.

He pointed out that allowing investors to make money from price declines in addition to price appreciation would help lift the PSE to the ranks of the more advanced bourses in the region.

"The ability to profit from declining prices is one of the hallmarks of a mature market," he said.

Rufo's views are echoed by PSE president Francis Lim, who has long pointed for the introduction of short-selling on the bourse.

In an interview, Lim explained that the practice of short-selling provides an effective way, which prevents the creation of asset price bubbles—which can explode with dramatic effects on the financial markets.

Short-selling, he said, would allow investors to bet against stocks which they believe are overvalued, helping temper their stock prices or pushing them closer to more realistic levels.

Lim added that the introduction of short-selling would increase trading volumes on the PSE—a situation which would contribute directly to the bourse coffers.

"With short-selling, people would now be able to trade in both directions," he said.

Taking their time

Despite the promises it holds, corporate regulators have taken their time approving the scheme.

In an interview, Securities and Exchange Commission chair Fe Barin said regulators wanted to make sure that unsophisticated investors are not precluded by the introduction of a product meant only for the most savvy market players.

"We wanted to make sure that all the safeguards are in place," she said.

Among the limitations that would initially be imposed on short-selling is the so-called "uptick rule"—adopted from the practice in the New York Stock Exchange—where a stock can only be sold short on a price uptick.

This prevents a short-seller from aggravating stock price declines by dumping massive amounts of shares on the market.

At the same time, short-selling will initially be limited to companies that are capitalized at P1.0 billion or more, and those blue chips that are highly liquid.

That means that only the stocks which the most issuance in price manipulations would initially be open to shorting.

"With the short-selling rules in place, investors may make money, or they can protect their investments, even when the market is retreating," Lim said. "With this, the markets will be more active."

So far, all stakeholders are crossing their fingers.

Fisheries sector growth on track despite drought

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE expects the fisheries sector to meet its production target this year despite the adverse effects of a prolonged dry spell.

In a report to agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources said the effect of the drought in Luzon could likely be limited to tilapia production.

BFAR director Malcolm Sarmiento projected the potential loss to reach 45,741 metric tons of freshwater tilapia, representing less than one percent of the total production target for 2007.

School production of the aquaculture, commercial and municipal fisheries sectors reached 1.267 million metric tons in the first quarter and 1.405 million metric tons in the second quarter.

Total production for the third quarter is expected to hit 1.494 million metric tons, while the last quarter production is seen at 968,344 metric tons.

Sarmiento said actual production in the first semester met projected growth in the second half will bring total yields in the fisheries sector to the target this year of five million metric tons.

He noted that the potential loss of 45,742 metric tons of freshwater tilapia can be offset by opening up more inland areas for production and for cultured tilapia in seawater areas.

"There is a need to produce more saline-tolerant tilapia fingerlings to enhance culture and production in seawater ponds," Sarmiento said.

The Philippines is currently the eighth largest fish-producing country with total production at 4.18 million MT.

This represents 2.4 percent of the total world production of 146.27 million metric tons, according to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Chemrez develops resin

By Abigail L. Ho

IN A BID TO LOWER COSTS and environment and health hazards associated with fiberglass production, Isinit Bien Chemrez Technologies Inc. has developed a resin based polymer resin, which the company claims is the first of its kind in the world.

ChemrezTech chief operating officer Dean Lee Jr. said the product, called Polyol-Aqua, could be used in laminates and strengths on fiberglass or others such as water tanks and cowltech panels.

Instead of using the solvent styrene to make the polyester resin preserve fiberglass materials, he said, Polyol-Aqua could be diluted in water.

This, he said, was a huge advantage as styrene was highly combustible and produces strong fumes.

He said ChemrezTech planned to export the product, adding that the company was now qualifying agents and distributors to market Polyol-Aqua and to other specialty resins to overseas customers.

Initial target markets for the product, he said, were countries in southeast Asia and Indochina.

From page B6

No free lunch

Not so for the Chinese. Not only do they require Chinese suppliers and contractors, the Chinese government even chooses which ones to deal with—as with ZTE in the NBN project. Thus, even the choice of supplier becomes the subject of a government-to-government agreement that leaves no room for the host recipient to seek better value even within the limited choices among possible Chinese firms.

On the more distant side is the perception that the Chinese are more willing to play along with or tolerate payoffs to government officials in return for bagging major projects. The current furor over the NBN project centers on such alleged overpricing to accommodate massive kickbacks for certain officials. In the end, we need to ask ourselves whether these obligations Chinese loans are truly good for us...or whether they are binding us into a bargain we would all be better off severing many times.

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People, Events & Products

Editor Jaime Espinosa

SPaCE offers solution to job mismatch

AIM CONDUCTS DEVELOPMENT COURSE FOR SUDANESE OFFICIALS
The Asian Nations Development Programme (ANDP) recently selected the school of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in the Philippines to conduct an environmental sector development management program to quickly design and implement and strategic management models of the Sudanese Government.

A PROBLEM THAT MOST GRADUATES encounter when hiring people for entry-level jobs is that applicants do not have the skills or competency required for the jobs as these are completely different from what graduates have studied in college.

Companies or the applicants themselves can address this problem of job mismatch by enrolling to short-term courses which will make them into efficient and competent professionals.

The De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPaCE) offers just these short-term diploma programs to address this problem of its subscribers. The specific subject areas are designed for individuals who already have a college degree but who want to learn a new skill or strengthen their competency in their field of work, and get promoted.

The SPaCE programs are designed by industry experts who customize the curriculum to suit the needs of the course participants. Best practices in each field of study and the latest trends and developments are also incorporated into the programs.

The curriculum includes case studies, hands-on exercises and workshops so there is immediate take-away value for the participants. What is learned today can be immediately applied in the workplace tomorrow.

Students can enjoy continuous schedule flexibility with these SPaCE programs as classes are six months, which can be finished in a year. Each module usually runs for six sessions or 42 class hours. Sessions are held every Saturday from 12:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Currently, SPaCE has ten diploma programs in various business disciplines and will open on Sep. 15. These are in the fields of Human Resource, Organization Development, Training Development, Professional Forum Management, Marketing Management, Marketing Communications, Retail and Franchise, Restaurant and Food Entrepreneurship, Real Estate, and Purchasing and Supply Chain Management.

Interested participants can inquire by calling 400-DLSU, or e-mailing space@dlsh.edu.ph. They can also log on to the SPaCE website at www.dlsh.edu.ph/space.

UP study cites economics of travel time on NLEX

PEOPLE EITHER MAINTAIN OR ENHANCE their capacity to wait if they can easily their destinations on time, or earlier.

Conversely, they become less productive in doing chores while held up in traffic owing to poor road conditions or traffic jams. For private car owners, as well as operators of passenger buses and jeepneys and cargo trucks, prolonged commuter encounters with higher vehicle operating costs and reduced productivity.

A study conducted recently by a team of economists from the University of the Philippines, Los Baños and the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), mapped out the economics of travel using, as specimens the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) (four-plus versus "non-toll" and the recently Metro Manila Skyway (MMS).

The researchers found that if motorists were to travel on MMS instead of the NLEX, they would incur additional expenses of P1,125 per trip, or a monthly total of P237 per car. In addition, they would incur a penalty of about P696 due to higher travel "time," for example, discomfort incurred.

Since travel time along the MMS is generally less than longer than on the NLEX, it was estimated that passengers of a large bus collection from Manila to Pangasinan, P1,125 per trip, is added.

The study team has also estimated an average increase of about 30 kph of vehicular speed along the NLEX compared to that on the North Diversion Road if there were no NLEX.

"This increase in speed has positive impact on the various cost items of NLEX," the study said.

It explained that every car uses various types of about P950 over the entire 84-km length of the NLEX. "This amount is significantly higher than the toll fee increase of P120," the team pointed out.

On the other hand, large bus operators enjoy much bigger savings of P1,040 per trip. "The (bus) operators therefore, would be well justified should be pass on part of the toll fee increase to bus passengers."

Two-axle truck operators generate savings of about 97% per trip, mainly due to the reduced travel time. "The saving enjoyed by truck operators is modest because the NLEX does not exert driver inputs to cope up speeds above optimum with the consequence of higher direct operating cost, including fuel consumption," the team explained.

The study was commissioned by the MMTC to determine the impacts of the NLEX improvements on such factors as road user cost, road safety and land use and values changes.

Road user cost consisted of basic vehicle operating cost (BVOC) and travel time cost. The BVOC components that were considered included fuel, lubricating oil, tires, spare parts, maintenance labor, capital, time (for maintained vehicles) and overhead. Based on Department of Public Works and Highways 2006 unit values.

Monetary value was attached to travel time on the theory that time spent traveling results in benefits or income from alternative productive activities.

Travel time and delay surveys were conducted with six cars along NLEX, three cars along the MMS, and three taxis along Islands connecting both roads. Interviews were conducted for both southbound and northbound directions, and done on a typical weekday covering the morning, noon and afternoon peak periods.

Travel speeds along the NLEX prior to the improvements were down from just less than 60 kph, while detailed road conditions inventory for the MMS was conducted based on personal observation. Road conditions, width and other geometric conditions that affect traffic flow and vehicle operating cost.

A TRUE BLOODED RAHA
Augusto G. Boleso Marcos (top) Monthly Senator Benigno S. Aquino (Bottom left) joined some of their members of the Rotary Club of Roxas Gloriano Manila, the first retired club in Bilibid. The Senator visited the compadres three days before. See story About Staff. Visiting the officials (left) are Senator Noynoy is ROTOM Showing club president Jonathan "Jun" Tang. ROXAS has become the first retired community service for 33 years. Continuing a legend. Interesting Legacy" is the birthday theme of the three year for the club. With the exhibition of Noynoy in the club, that club is certain to "overcome something in the future generations" to its members goes unbounded.

EXPERIENCE BIGEN'S SILK TOUCH
Mayor Ed Gil, Jaime's founding first color makes, co-founder of Bigen Furniture Industries Inc. congratulations artist Robinsons Galleries Ortigas Pavilion to more than 50 years of service and patronage. Aside from the first coloring, customers also availed themselves of Bigen Silk Touch, your hair treatment to give your customers Bigen silk touch. Bigen Silk Touch is the perfect hair color for fashionable Filipinas. Here also organized a special exhibition volunteer to mention anniversary of first color hair treatment. Bigen Silk Touch is available in all leading Manila from Sep. 10 to 16. Catch the Bigen Silk Touch exhibit ongoing at SM Makati until Sep. 13, and at SM North EDSA from Sep. 10 to 24. Mores are all left. Vicente Fabaro, product manager, Jesse Robredo Museum, Rosa Del Mundo, Art Director, management supervisor, Audrey Ok during the Ortigas Lobby ceremony.

Antel Spa boosts FSRS expertise

PROVIDING PREMIUM HOTEL services require infrastructure, and systems that match the skill and experience honed by years of training. But the hotel business must trade in a task that must serve but only a few really achieves. Such was achieved when Antel Land Holdings Inc. combined its Full-Service Residential Suites (FSRS) concept with the premier management savvy of Genesis Hotels & Resorts Corp. (Genesis) to the first rising Antel Spa Residences.

FSRS is a revolutionary concept pioneered by Antel Land Holdings Inc. in 2005 that sought to provide true hotel facilities and services in a residential environment as the owner, a big departure from the traditional upscale condotel and apartelle-style buildings, wherein the hotel services are just merely add-ons to the existing structures.

Antel's approach gave birth to a non-category and will soon serve as the benchmark for future residential towers in the country, spearheaded by Antel Spa Residences and its predecessor The A. Venue Residences.

With well-respected leaders in their fields of expertise, the partnership of Antel Land Holdings, the pioneer of the FSRS concept, and Genesis Hotels, a subsidiary of Genesis Corporation with 30 solid years of experience in the hotel and resort management in the country and overseas is a perfect alliance that is set to change the condominium hotel business landscape into a more dynamic and profitable experience.

"With traction in the country growing by leaps and bounds over the last couple of years, we've seen the shortage of hotel accommodation for better. $200, hotel Spa Residences hold early take the number is a timely and strategic move since the lifestyle hotel's target market is the upscale travel-friendly. FSRS executive will greatly aid us in implementing our proven management style and expertise," said Genesis president Miguel Crespardo.

According to him, FSRS fully complements the ideal and tested model employed by Genesis in providing the finest services to clients.

"With FSRS, Genesis can only further the people, expertise and resources but also the facilities and services the key ingredients for successful hotel and resort operations in one unit," added Yuan Isaacs, the Makati district, even better," Crespardo said.

"Through this revolutionary model, Antel Spa Residences, together with the A. Venue Hotel and Residences, will showcase the number of residential condo and the indispensable luxuries offered by hotels," said Antel director Ivanhoe Miguel Gazmin.

He added that under the reputable hands of Genesis, Antel Spa Residences promises to deliver only the best standard of services, as those being rooted can in Antel's Plaza in Pasig City. The Rizal Botanical Garden, and Casa del Mar Golf & Dive Resort in Subic as this is also of deluxe hotels under the roster of Genesis Hotels. Thus, transforming the concept of "lifestyle hotels" is distinctly handled by Genesis-managed properties is always associated with the concept of perfect hospitality known as: first-class and exclusive, personalized service, and world-class amenities.

Antel Spa Residences is set to stand within the 1.7-hectare domain of Antel Lifestyle City. It will offer full hotel services and features at the resort, with complete and modern elements "Suite of distinction" facilities, dining, entertaining, offices, manpower support, concierge, and laundry, which further the total pampering experience.

The first-rising tower will also offer special services that will pamper you with "suite-ability" benefits thanks to its future residence, including a wide range of spa and wellness facilities; a Wellness Academy; nature trails; meditative courtyards; private spa and massage cubicles; sauna baths; resort spa and lobby pool; a dry infinity pool and lounge; and a commercial space for organic restaurants and outdoor beauty and medical clinics, and wellness shops.

For inquiries about the new Antel Spa Residences, call 896-8888 or log on to www.antel.com.ph. Interested parties may also visit Antel Land Showcase Lounge at 5/241 Dito Land Showcase Lounge at 5/241 Dito Land Showcase corner Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Gerald Jose M. Garcia, postgraduate course coordinator, or Maria Florencia, executive assistant, at 634-0882 to 921-9444 local 2101 or 2103.

Aging gracefully with diabetes

OVER 16 AND AGING WORLD. AN ESTIMATE of 600 million people over the age of 60 are living all over the globe. This number is projected to reach 2 billion in year 2050.

In the Philippines, data from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, revealed that 5.97 percent or 4.6 million Filipinos are aged 60 and above.

Advancing age, along with genetics and excess weight, is one of the risk factors developing type 2 diabetes. All over the world, approximately eight percent of people over age 60 have diabetes.

Within over 60 years of age are nearly 20 times more likely to develop diabetes than those aged 20 to 40," said Dr. Joy G. Bondoc-Bautista, author-founder of DiabetEASE magazine.

The August-September issue of DiabetEASE includes relevant issues for the elderly with diabetes. The cover story focuses on how to grow old gracefully with diabetes and other tips from experts on how to deal with the illness. The issue also contains articles on how to deal with daily activities, how to overcome sexual dysfunction and weight, as well as general day-to-day tips for the elderly with diabetes.

Experts also answer questions on how to prevent low blood sugar attacks at night, and what vitamin supplements can be good for elderly diabetics. Endocrinologist Dr. Sheldon He writes an article on everything one needs to know about cholesterol and medications, while ophthalmologist specialist Dr. Brenda Joy Evangelista gives precautions tips for wheelchair users. Other features include recipes for summer swimmers, healthy soup recipes, and understanding blood labels.

Gaining the crown in top diabetes doctor Augusto D. Litonjua, known in the medical world as the "Father of Philippine Endocrinology". The issue also features Ballroom dancing champ Edith Godinez in the video about Ballroom dancing as a stress buster.

Aside from these articles, DiabetEASE is also packed with the latest news and trends about diabetes and diabetes care. DiabetEASE is a bi-monthly glossy magazine for people with diabetes, their families and the people in general.

DiabetEASE magazine is available in all Mercury Drug Bookstore outlets nationwide. For subscription inquiries, call 892-0721 to 24.

St. Luke's Residency Programs open to applicants

ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER, THE FIRST hospital in the Philippines to be accredited by the Joint Commission International, is now accepting doctor applicants for its Residency Training Program. The entrance examination will be on Sep. 15 at Auditorium 1, 5/F Cathedral Heights Building, St. Luke's Medical Center. Applicants are required to submit the results to the graduate medical education office on or before Sep. 12. They are also reminded to bring all original documents and to pay a fee of P500 application fee. Call 723-0101/0301 local 2300.

HERITAGE HOTEL'S MALAYSIAN FOOD PROMO ONGOING UNTIL SEP. 13

Ambassador to Malaysia Rastid Wahid Dominique of Malaysia and Middle East, general manager, The Heritage Hotel Manila, recently entertained his guests with delicious delicacies of Golden Mansion of Malaysian Chef Sam, Malaysian food promotion ongoing until Sep. 12, for lunch and dinner at the Cafe featuring Chef Feyal and Chef de Jesus. Board Millennium hotel Limited Room for more info of Cebu Pacific Air. Welcoming the ceremony were Lourdes Ong, marketing head, Cebu Pacific Air (left), Angelica, sales manager, Turkish (2nd from left), Zet Gomez, marketing manager, Tourism Malaysia (4th from left), Gibelli Sheila, hotel manager manager, Turkish (3rd from right), and Marcella Rodrigo, director of sales and marketing, Heritage hotel.

INFOTECH

Sleeker, edgier Razr hits the road

By Abigail L. Ho

THE RAZR V8 from Motorola comes in in ons as an image phone.

WHEN ASKED to describe the latest in consumer electronics that came out with its thin clamshell Razr model more than two years ago, the competition didn't know what hit them.

Although the Razr model was initially promoted as an exclusive Cingular phone, Motorola eventually altered it on the mass market to the mid-priced segment, cementing its position as the mobile phone maker to the world's second largest vendor.

The Razr model also reintroduced the clamshell design to fashionable and handy reminiscent of days of yore when Motorola released the StarTac model—touted as the world's first full clamshell phone—in an age of candybar phones that were just taking baby steps to wrestle the digital revolution.

To Ben Alex, Motorola Philippines mobile business unit marketing head (first Lieutenant said the Razr model, in its different incarnations and updates, remained the company's bestseller.

In a bid to maintain its hold on the No. 2 position in both globally and in the Philippines, Motorola has launched the StarTac II, a slimline and more feature-packed version of the original thin clamshell.

"It's really more of an image phone, although it also has some added features that we don't have in the Razr models from before," he said. "Silver going more for the 'silhouettes'—for people who go for gadgets that they really want to be seen using rather than individuals who look solely for features."

Unlike its predecessor, the Razr2 V8 has a slimlier glass-metal finish and a larger external screen that boasts richer, more vibrant colors. It also has a smart key feature that allows users to answer text messages, access pop-up optimized messages, and even silence the clamshell's ring upon.

For music lovers, the phone has a touchscreen feature that enables users to control their sound trip without having to flip open the handset. It also comes with a dedicated music player.

On-board memory has also been significantly expanded to 512MB, from the previous Razr model's 64MB.

The Razr generation Razr2 model, however, is limited to an internal memory capacity so it does not have an expansion slot for added memory.

Llanejas said memory capacity on later Razr2 models would be expandable to up to 2GB.

"The phone looks good and it has new features, too," he said. "I believe it's really not anyone's competition or features, but a matter of personalization. People nowadays want to be individuals. They don't want to be common."

He said the individualistic spirit was exactly what Motorola was targeting with the Razr2 V8.

"The Razr's follow trends. We make the trends," he said.

On a more global scale, Motorola is banking on the Razr2 and other upcoming handset models to regain the modest share that it lost during the second quarter.

According to research firm IDC, Motorola's second quarter market share shrank to 12 percent from 22.1 percent in the same period last year.

Here in the Philippines, Llanejas said the handset manufacturer remained a strong No. 1, behind the still undisputed leader Nokia.

To push sales of the Razr2 V8, he said the company would be investing heavily on advertising and promotion, as well as in pulling up more concept stores in strategic parts of the country.

Symantec launches new Norton for Windows

By Rex T. Dalmacio

MOST PC USERS STORE SENSITIVE data in their computers, but there are many who fail to back up their files, said Symantec Corp.

"According to our research, 91 percent of consumers are making personal data on their PCs, but we also found that 42 percent of consumers do not back up their data," vice-president for consumer products Norton Trollope said.

To encourage daily backup among clients, Symantec said it has released upgraded software to make backing up more convenient.

The releases are the Norton Save and Restore 2.0 and Norton Ghost 12.0 for Windows Vista and Windows XP users.

The latest version of Norton Save & Restore preserves important data such as digital photos, MP3s, and financial documents in designated folders. An enhanced more, Norton Ghost 12.0 further leverages Symantec's Backup Exec System Recovery solution for businesses to create Norton's feature, most advanced personal backup and recovery tool to date.

"Our latest version of Norton Save and Restore is the most consumer and digital friendly backup solution in the market today," Trollope said. "With more setup wizards, an improved interface and flexible backup options, more users get peace of mind knowing their data is safe and secure."

With enhanced browsing and data recovery points, Norton Save and Restore enables users to fully recover or to quickly search for and recover specific lost or damaged files or folders.

Norton Ghost 12.0 also data and system protection to the next level with powerful new features such as remote management console, a new Boot Environment, and lightsout Restore. Support for run-from-media emergency recovery enables users to back up other Norton Ghost clients on the network. Integration with Google Desktop allows users to create searchable backup indexes to make recovering data even faster.

Both Norton Save & Restore 2.0 and Norton Ghost 12 are now available for purchase from various Symantec retail stores, the Symantec online store at www.symantecstore.com.ph, as well as other online retailers. Norton Save & Restore 2.0 and Norton Ghost are priced at P2,249 and P3,149 respectively.

Users do more than call on their mobile phones

By Tina G. Santos

SINGAPORE—MOBILE PHONES have become more than just devices for making voice calls and sending text messages.

Citing a recent Nokia study, an executive of the mobile phone giant said at least 76 percent of users listen to music, 44 percent take photos, 34 percent play games and 40 percent browse the Internet.

"More and more people [are using] the multimedia functionality [of] their mobile phone units," said Hiro Hashimoto, SVP for Multimedia Experiences, Nokia Mobile Phones. "But we are not satisfied. They keep looking for new innovations and more interesting features on their mobile phones."

As if to highlight this point, Nokia has unveiled four well-designed mobile devices—the Nokia 5610 XpressMusic, the Nokia 3610 XpressMusic, the Nokia N81 and the new Nokia N95 Black Edition—specifically optimized for entertainment, music and games.

"These new entertainment-enabled devices are for customers who want their music, games and favorite media with them wherever they go," added Vijay Balasubramaniyan, Nokia's senior vice president for customer and service operations in the Asia Pacific, during the recent product launch here dubbed "Nokia Go Play."

Expected to be available during the fourth quarter of the year, each device offers dedicated music or gaming keys, expanded memory, large screens and extended battery performance to provide quick and easy access to entertainment content.

The Nokia 5610 XpressMusic is the newest music phone. It is the company's latest addition to its media-centric line of products.

Although small in size—97.9 mm thick and weighing less than 75 grams—it is comfortable in a pocket or purse, the Nokia 5610 XpressMusic is considered a true music powerhouse as it offers up to 16 hours of music playback, memory for up to 3,000 songs on an optional 4GB microSD card and dedicated keys that make listening to music a breeze.

Available in red and blue, the new phone model has a 2-megapixel camera and a bright 2-inch screen.

The Nokia 3610 XpressMusic is also a music phone that has been an integrated hardware slider button for ease of use in accessing through playlists. It offers up to 8 hours of music playback and memory with capacity for 3,000 songs or, an optional 4GB microSD card.

But more than just a phone and music player, the Nokia 5610 XpressMusic has seven high-quality 3.2 megapixel cameras with autofocus and LED flash.

Another upcoming product in the Nokia N81, which is the new top of the line music phone that boasts a new user interface and a web-based HSDPA-enhanced music and gaming unit, a 3.5 mm headphone connector and 8G (and 16GB) internal memory.

NOKIA N95 8GB

The Nokia N81 multimedia computer is a true mobile entertainment powerhouse.

It is configured to find, buy, manage and play music and games purchased from the Nokia's new Internet services, including the Nokia Music Store and N-Gage.

The Nokia N81 comes in two versions: the Nokia N81 8GB with internal 8GB flash memory and the Nokia N81 with capacity-able memory.

Then, there's the black edition Nokia N95 8GB, an improvement of its previous model.

With all the key features of its predecessor, including a 5 megapixel camera, the Nokia N95 8GB now boasts 8GB of memory. It also boasts a better battery life and a bigger 2.8 inch screen—the largest ever for a multimedia computer.

"Nokia is no longer just a voice company," executives assured, adding that the new phone models offer content that would be more relevant. Is Bent. "And those are currently in the area of entertainment and games."

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BUSINESS

Japan augments SCTEx budget with ₱6-B loan

By Rommel W. Dominguez

THE BASES CONVERSION Development Authority has secured a ₱6-billion supplemental loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, which would be used to cover the shortfall in funds for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway.

BCDA Vice President Edwin Jose said that the JBIC approved the loan last Sept. 6, but it could take six months before any disbursement could be made.

"For the record, BCDA is arranging for a commercial loan of P4 billion from a consortium of banks that include Development Bank of the Philippines, Land Bank of the Philippines and Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.," Jose said in an interview.

He added that the group of banks has approved in principle the loan, which BCDA will use as bridge financing until the JBIC supplemental loan becomes available.

Last week, BCDA president and chief executive Narvin L. Abaya said that the 93.27-kilometer Clark-Tarlac section of SCTEx is expected to be opened only in the year, now that it is already 96-percent complete.

Believed to as Package 3 of SCTEx, the Clark-Tarlac leg was supposed to be finished by October. But contractor Hanjoma Taisei-Nippon Steel (HTN) Joint Venture has again asked for an extension of 54 days.

Package 1 is the 36-kilometer Subic-Clark section, which is expected to be opened next year.

However, contractor Fujitsu-Obayashi-JFE Engineering Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Joint Venture (HO-JM-JV) has also asked for a four-month extension, which means that the section would be completed by March 2008.

BCDA is bankrolling the construction of the project through a ₱20.9-billion JBIC loan that was signed in 2004.

Abaya said the project's appreciation was blamed for the shortfall, adding that the contract's strength effectively increased the Peso's value to some ₱5.8 billion.

RP sees surplus after years in the red

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE COUNTRY IS EXPECTED to post a consolidated public sector surplus of P68.8 billion in 2008, ending years of being in the red following the Asian crisis of the late 1990s.

The public sector's estimated budget surplus next year is a huge turnaround from the projected deficit of P21.8 billion this year.

The expected fiscal recovery will result from the national government's effort to post a balanced budget by 2008 from an estimated deficit of P62 billion this year.

The government is banking on improved tax collection next year, citing reforms to shore up collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

Data from the Department of Finance show that budget surpluses will be recorded by social security institutions (in the amount of P51.3 billion), the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (51 billion), government financial institutions (P7.2 billion) and local governments (P15.6 billion).

Social security institutions includes the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System and Philhealth.

Data also show that P11 billion may be added to the surplus resulting from adjustments of previously computed financial data.

On the other hand, deficits in the public sector's budget next year include the P16.3 billion in combined deficit of government-owned and -controlled corporations, and the P16.6 billion that would be allocated to pay debts of the old central bank.

Market bullish on Avant

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BUSINESS Monday

Business Features Editor Marjie Quimpo-Espino

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Dream weavers

WEAVE in stark, straight-to-the-bread

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

BUYERS AROUND THE world may not know it, but that piece of exquisite outdoor furniture they bought from Cebu-based furniture exporter Dedon Manufacturing Inc. has helped keep many poor Filipinos youths off the streets.

This is because, over the last two years, close to 600 out-of-school youths in the core of the Iloilo Business Technology Center in Cebu have been trained and then hired as upskilled weavers to meet the increasing export demand for Dedon's high-end line of outdoor furniture.

Another 300 are scheduled to be trained

DESIGN. Dedon and CEO help impart weaving skills to laypeople

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MOVEMENTS

Leo Burnett's exec goes to Hall of Fame

FOR WINNING SIX GOLD AS OF THE YEAR AWARDS, LEO BURNETT Manila's chief executive officer Richard Bonnevaux recently honored as the fourth inductee into the Creative Gold Hall of Fame.

Bonnevaux, who hails from England, likewise distinguished himself as the first foreigner ever so honored. It took him only seven years in his existing at this AD of the Year Awards by Leo Burnett. He was inducted into the Creative Gold Hall of Fame for his Donald's "Lolo" TV, Mr.Donald's "Granny" TV, Pedro "Lasa mo Ba" Print, Pedro "Bowling Mommy's" Radio, Title "Indian" TV and Wild "Abortion Millions" Radio. Additionally, Leo Burnett took home a silver for TV Campaign of the Year for Mr. Clean "Washing Machine" campaign.

Bonnevaux, who has been in the advertising and graphic design, he joined Leo Burnett 20 years ago. After working at the Leo Burnett offices in London, Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh, he was posted to Metropolitan Leo Burnett in Manila in 1998.

New PNOC president named

Antonio M. Oposa was recently appointed president and CEO of the Philippine National Oil Co.-Power Corp. (PNOC-EDC).

Oposa is a veteran energy executive and banker for Citigroup, was named by the government to oversee the non-profit consolidation of a number of PNOC subsidiaries, including PNOC-EDC, by appointed.

His overseas experience in the global financial scene will serve him handy for managing these jurisdictions.

Next to leave the presidency of the PNOC Exploration Corp. (PNOC-EC), the Company's oil and gas subsidiary.

His 25 years of overseas assignment included senior management positions in Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and Latin America.

Oposa was the first Asian and Filipino to receive the prestigious Citigroup Chairman's Award, not just once, but twice. His last posting at Citigroup was as Asia Regional Head for Corporate Banking, credit for Associate countries in the 10 Asian countries.

Oposa obtained his BSBA and MBA from the University of the Philippines. It was during his student days that he founded AIESEC Philippines, an international student exchange program at the time of finance and foundation. But has benefited thousands of Filipinos and participated in by his universities in the country.

Microsoft appoints managing director

Microsoft Philippines recently announced the appointment and appointment of Rafael Rollan as new managing director. Rollan will start his new role officially on Oct. 1, 2007.

Rollan has been with Microsoft for five and a half years, where he did first as sales manager for enterprise accounts. Over the last four years, Rollan served four very up and back more the helm of Hewlett-Packard business as director of the Enterprise Pte Ltd. in Asia.

"I can't wait to start about the opportunity to lead this tech-Philippines. It's very exciting. "We have a strong and passionate team here in the country. We know that there is a lot many opportunities for our customers and for our country to benefit from technology. We will focus on helping our customers and partners optimize these opportunities. We will also continue to help build the country's IT infrastructure and work to empower the underserved markets."

Rollan takes over from Antonio "Tito" Lucas Jr., who has been the managing director of Microsoft Philippines for the last four years. Under Jason's leadership, the subsidiary tripled its business as well as its manpower resources in the country and completed several citizenship programs designed to help aid in the country's economic development.

Filipino heads Asean council

The Chamber of Furniture of the Philippines (CFIP) has officially taken over the reins of the Asean Furniture Industries Council (AFIC) from the Malaysian Furniture Industries Council (MFIC).

The Philippines, which is next in line for Chairmanship after Malaysia will carry the baton for AFIC from 2008 to 2009. The other member countries of the AFIC are Indonesia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand.

MFIC "Hong Kong, Mr. Lee Kwan Hoong of MFIC and this immediate past chair of AFIC he ready handed over the reigns of AFIC to Abraham B. De Lungahin who was appointed by the board of CFIP as chair of AFIC for the two-year term. De Lungahin has previously served as president of CFIP for two terms and also managed his own company, Designs Ligna.

De Lungahin said, "I am honored to be given the great responsibility to take on this demanding role. The new secretariat will build upon the good foundations established by the past committees and continue to push for new initiatives in the field since part of the Asean furniture industries, as yet to members.

"AFIC will become a active player in increasing intra Asean trade and continue to enhance our members' competitiveness amid intense global competition."

Pacific Internet appoints new VP

Pacific Internet, an affiliate of Pacific Internet Limited, one of the largest Internet service providers in Asia Pacific, has appointed Rosemarie Pineda as the new vice president for product development and marketing.

In her dual function as the head for both marketing and product development, Pineda will supervise the development of new products and IP services such as those over Internet Protocol (VoIP), datacenter-based access and other value-added services like managed security, voice solutions for small businesses and thousands of the top-tier hotels. She is also in charge of growing Pacific Internet's regional brands in the Philippine market.

She is further expected to lead customer and market research initiatives, advertising and promotional campaigns, as well as conceptualize and implement Pacific Internet Philippines' "Go to Market" programs.

Pineda's extensive experience in marketing, sales, product and brand management, in the telecommunications, manufacturing and consumer goods industries will be key in the new role of the Pacific Internet team.

"There is a growing market for value-added services such as VoIP, data and Internet services, as the country has vast industry experience and insights will help us better to develop innovative products and advertising campaigns that will truly capture the changing market's needs," said Jojo Yap, managing director of Pacific Internet Philippines.

Peripact chairs Yegap

Edmar Ibanez and Elaine Yeoh, sector Representative from a Mare Peripact was appointed by the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) as chair of the Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia-Pacific (Yegap) during its meeting held in Pacific, Australia. CACCI is composed of 23 member countries.

Yegap's main objective is to promote pro-enterprise spirit among young entrepreneurs in Asia-Pacific.

Yeoh-Ibanez said, "We want to cultivate a culture of entrepreneurship among the youth in the Asia-Pacific region by pushing for the creation of entrepreneurship subjects in the secondary level and entrepreneurship courses and departments in the tertiary level, the establishment of university-affiliated business incubator facilities and the creation of an Entrepreneur Week/Month in schools."

In 1993, Peripact hosted the Young Entrepreneurs' Business Club, the predecessor of the Philippine Chamber of the Commerce Industry, composed of the top 100 Filipino companies today the age of 40.

The club spearheaded the Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP) that provides training to budding entrepreneurs.

The YEP is now a government program adopted by the National Youth Commission whose Pangulo Alvarez serves as its council member.

Credit bureau: Where do we go from here?

MAPping THE FUTURE

Jaime V. Ladaw

THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF A CREDIT bureau has garnered mixed emotions from the public. It has been met with concern, even fear, for the possible loss of privacy.

On the other hand, the financial sector tends to look favorably towards its formation. This is especially true in the recent years, as moves that advocate the burgeoning micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the country have become more active.

Backtracking to the basics, what is a credit bureau in the first place? How does this affect everyone – from the banks to the common consumer?

A credit bureau is an independent organization that compiles information on individuals and corporate entities. It aims to facilitate exporting and sharing of credit information among lenders to minimize nonperforming loans and assets in the industry, to limit fraud and to aid financial institutions in evaluating and entering credit based on borrowers' abilities to pay.

There are three types of credit bureaus: The basic, full and world class bureau. The basic bureau gathers negative information, while the Full bureau, both positive and negative.

On a completely different level, the world class bureau seeks to break an exclusively broad data spectrum, covering even consulting services.

A world class bureau collects unbiased and factual records on identity, public and monetary details, credit transactions and histories, etc.

It enables the use of risk management, fraud and loss prevention tools in order to stop identity theft, improve transparency, encourage investment and provide useful information for economic growth.

The consolidation of data in a single useful database for lenders could generate many benefits to the borrowers. Lower cost of credit decision and better rates for consumers due to the competition created among the lenders.

Benefits

The establishment of a credit bureau brings about benefits to various sectors of the society in particular:

Consumers and Businesses. Along with a strong economy and a stable financial sector, consumers and businesses can have better access to credit because of increased availability. The existence of a credit bureau also urges individuals and corporate entities to build up their credit report histories and histories.

Financial sector. Financial institutions can make accurate risk predictions due to the availability and accessibility to a breadth of credit information. Equipped with the accurate data, banks can lend to broader risk segments and implement pricing that reflects individual risks.

Regulatory agencies. Many security information on the health of the financial sector enables better supervision.

Economy. A well-regulated and thriving financial sector increases the stability of capital allocation and allows for better credit availability to consumers and businesses, and ultimately spurring economic growth.

Principles

The establishment of a credit bureau, albeit highly advantageous, necessitates the support of several organizations, mainly banking and financial institutions. The success of a credit bureau is highly dependent on the adherence to the Fundamental principles of:

- Principle of Reciprocity—The credit bureau members would have access to the credit history provide data.
- Principle of Neutrality—The credit bureau will only collect and present facts, and not opinions.
- Efficient Dispute Handling—The credit bureau will provide an effective means to handle dispute solving out of data sourced and presented by the bureau.
- Security Standards—The credit bureau will ensure data confidentiality and secured access to data.
- Consumer Data Protection—The credit bureau will ensure an effective means of managing consent of subjects of credit bureau.

Infrastructure

A credit bureau infrastructure must be highly sustainable, and must have the ability to collect data from varied sources such as banks, financial institutions, utility providers, telecommunications and public institutions (i.e. Securities and Exchange Commission, Department of Trade and Industry, Commission on Audit, Courts, etc.). It should have the capability to adopt a presentation format that is both comprehensive and intelligible, and identify detailed results of the following:

- Demographic and identity information about consumer (individual) and commercial (business) entities
- Credit information
- Payment history
- Security / Collateral & Guarantee information
- Relationship information
- Inquiry information
- Litigation information
- Public records

Conclusion

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) has long been pushing for the passage of the Credit Bureau Bill, with it in progress.

Banks and other industry groups have fully backed up this endeavor, but to date, discussions and talks about the credit bureau remain as in—conversation topics. Ideas ... held decades of brilliance that never got past that.

And as always, we are lagging behind our Asian neighbors such as Thailand, Hong Kong and Vietnam. It is not about time that a more focused real economic growth be given serious attention?

(The author is chair of the MAP Chapters Committee and President of Dun & Bradstreet (Philippines) Inc. Feedback at majaver@globelines.com.ph)

AFTER their training, Don Bosco graduates are now ready to be employed as specialty workers.

Dream weavers

From page B1-1

DEDON'S products find their way abroad

because new orders have been pouring in, which proves yet again how handiwork made and designed in the Philippines has merits to stack in the world market.

That all started in 2004, when Dedon could not accept any more export orders because it lacked the necessary manpower to produce the materials that made Dedon furniture a cut above the rest, thus hampering its ability to meet orders on time.

An destiny would have it, Don Bosco had earlier approached Dedon to ask if the manufacturing firm could accept some of its vocational school students, namely carpentry school youth, for on the job training.

Dedon accepted, and it was so impressed by the skills and attitude of the Don Bosco students-turned-work that it ended up hiring many of them after their two-month training, mostly as welders, says Oscar Nelly S. Quandelacy, values formation program manager of Don Bosco.

Dedon CEO Bobby Andonovic then thought that with the value training and skills of the Don Bosco students, they could be easily trained to learn a new skill—weaving—and solve its human resource problem.

But while Don Bosco was interested in the concept and welcomed the possibility of helping more marginalized youth, it was hesitant to undertake the project not only because it was out of its comfort zone—Don Bosco was more into welding, automotive repair and carpentry—but also because it did not have IOU wire up to the task.

Dedon, on the other hand, was also cautious about investing in the training because it also did not know if the partnership would work out. It did not have that much cash to burn to gamble on the project.

It was at this point that the German Development Service (DED) came into the picture through its SCOPE project.

SCOPE consultant Manfred Niggel said the chance of embedding a vocational training center in Dedon's supply chain was too good to pass up.

Having its role in context, DED invested 300,000 euro in the construction of a training center for weavers within the Don Bosco compound, as provided by the memorandum of agreement forged in December 2004 between DED, Dedon and Don Bosco.

Don Bosco committed to train and provide Dedon with skilled weavers that the company badly needed, while Dedon and DED provided the funding and technical support.

The project got off the ground in January 2005 and by June, the center graduated its first graduates—237 out-of-school youth aged 18 to 25, who were proud to call themselves highly skilled weavers.

From June to November last year, another 160 students graduated from the school.

"Dedon took care of their skills training, Don Bosco took care of the values training, so that it would be motivating those kinds of workers that they are," Quandelacy says.

At the center's first formal weaving school, the students go to Dedon for orientation and technical skills training. After two weeks, they begin work on marketable furniture pieces that Dedon buys from the students.

Those who then go back to Don Bosco for continued values training and, after just two months, they are assured of a job at Dedon or one of its many subcontractors.

Challenges inevitably cropped up along the way, and thanks to the system were ironed out. But the first phase was a resounding success.

"That the out-of-school youth under Don Bosco learned a new and marketable skill while Dedon was able to increase production by as much as 1.5—common looks of furniture, are not the only measures of success.

More importantly, the project has changed the way the youth think of themselves. For the first time, they are dreaming big.

"They have changed the face of these young people," Quandelacy says. "Many of them feel good about earning money for themselves. Some of them have even decided to go back to school. They now have a sense of direction and responsibility that they did not have before."

All of these business and psychological benefits are what DED wants to see the partnership to its next phase, which should see the training of another 500 weavers.

Dedon and Don Bosco can't wait to get started.

SHARI'S happy workers

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BUSINESS Monday

TELCO CUTS THROUGH CLUTTER

Globe consolidates units under single brand, logo

GERARDO Ablaza Jr., Globe president and chief executive officer

By Dante L. Lucas

HOW IMPORTANT IS A NEW logo to improving and enriching the business of a company?

How important is consolidating a company's different product lines under a single brand name?

In the cutthroat world of telecommunications services, many apparently place a significant role in bringing a company competitive edge vis-a-vis its rivals, especially when one is up against a behemoth with more resources and an edge in market share.

New logo

Globe Telecom Inc. recently unveiled its new brand logo called "Globe Life" and merged all its corporate identities under a single "Globe" brand.

Henceforth, all products of the company and its subsidiaries would be marketed to the public using a single name, eliminating a plethora of brands, which company officials said, had "created confusion" both internally and externally.

In a briefing, Globe Telecom president and CEO Ernest de C. Ablaza Jr. expressed hopes that the company would experience a "lift" in its market share and earnings due to the rebranding, but stressed that such a benefit would only be a by-product of the company's main goal.

"What we really plan to do is to simplify things for our publics, both inside and out," he said. "The simplifies our brand approach and makes [the company] easier to remember."

The company was previously using several brands like Globe Solutions and Globequest for broadband solutions offered to business users.

While Ablaza was hesitant to admit it, however, it is a tried and tested principle in marketing that having a unified public image increases brand recall, as long as the products offered by the company are broadly within the same business line.

Ablaza described the branding strategy of Globe's various units "not as 'whatness]' and 'will call' to remember" and the company's second-largest telecommunications network had "a proliferation of brands."

"We decided that we would like to have the mission of 'connecting lives through communication' manifest specifically as benefits of 'ease and relevance' for our customers," he said. "In the spirit of our mission, we would like our products and services to be easy to understand, easy to use and hassle-free."

'Globe Life'

According to the company's marketing line, the "Globe Life" logo "carries with it a promise to enrich lives through ease and relevance."

"Globe will strive to create and deliver products and services that will greatly benefit customers bringing them closer to their aspirations, and connecting them with the people and events that matter most," the company said in a statement.

Officials pointed out that the corporate structure of the company and its operating units would remain largely unscathed by the rebranding, as only the public face would change.

"Globe's mission is to transform and enrich lives through communications," the company said. "Outwardly, this defines how we think, how we work and how we behave. But it would be worthless if this mission remained locked up in Globe's executive board room, and did not translate to customer benefit."

The new symbol "is meant to promote endless possibilities," the company said. "It illustrates the wealth of products and services that Globe offers to enrich their customers' experience. Each icon in the new logo represents not just the things Globe offers today, but also those that inspire Globe to innovate."

At the center of the "Globe Life" logo is a heart, representing the company's focus on its customers "who are at the core of everything we do," Globe added.

Company officials also explained that the focus is moving toward a state where its customers would have to "subscribe" with only a single representative to have his various concerns addressed, even if their company representative would have to coordinate with other units internally.

Globe business head Gil B. Genio added that "what is new ... is that [the client] will not only use brand new and clean products and services, and our refreshed communications and spirit...Getting every individual in Globe to be more customer-centric than ever."

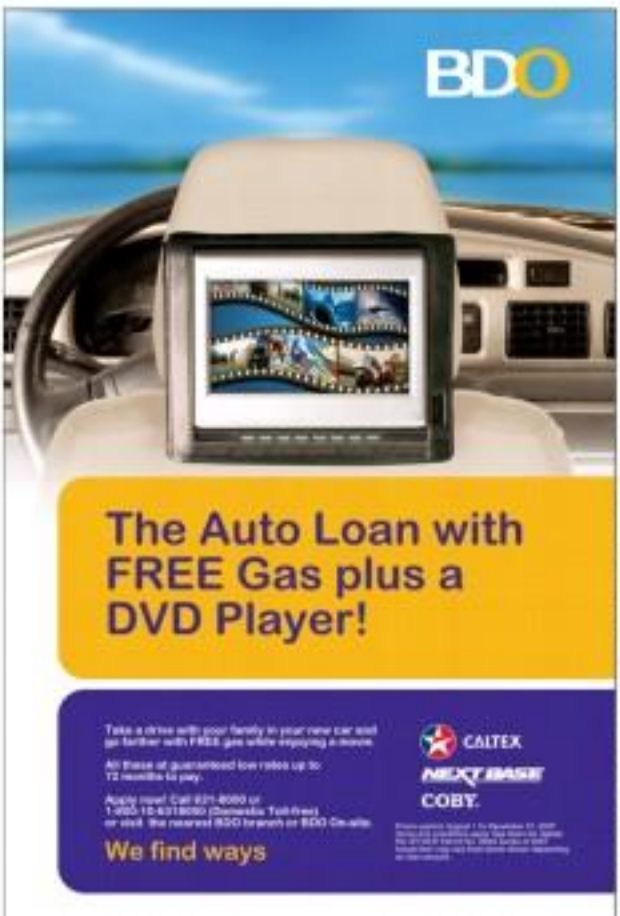
Unified approach

Globe Business will now be the center brand for the Enterprise Business Group and Small and Medium Enterprise Group.

Globe consumer market business group head Ferdinand M. Dela Cruz added that the unified brand also brings with it new products and services.

During the media briefing, Globe assured its promise of excellent customer experience in all touch points is not from competitor, as OPM female pop-rock artist aims to bring DPWH and their families together by making communication even more affordable and seamless and that Globe and Yahoo! partnership for browsing made easy via one-touch exclusive on My Globe.

"The world of telecommunications, as we know and experience it, continues to evolve, and Globe along with it," Ablaza said.



Sitel Phils produces first graduates of new course

By Nicanor Cabonoy
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—AN EMERGING call center course developed by business outsourcing giant Sitel Philippines has produced its first batch of students.

The University of the Cordilleras (UC), the first school to roll the Sitel-designed course in communications and technology applications, honored 68 graduating computer students who officially passed the course during graduation rites last August.

Sitel is also preparing to tie up with the University of Baguio (UB), which has obtained several Sitel-developed call center curriculum a plans to offer this year, the business learned.

Dr. Leonardo Aguinaldo, dean of the UC college of business administration, said Sitel has been negotiating for partnership with Baguio-based schools to ensure a labor force once it expands.

Sitel president Danilo Reyes told the Inquirer earlier that the firm plans to expand its call center services to include technical or marketing response systems for customers, however said clinics listed overseas.

He said the Sitel course modules would be offered as an elective for students, who would have hand training in Sitel training processes.

Aguinaldo said partnership arrangement with Sitel is ideal for universities because it opens doors to the $49-billion global industry.

For many universities, call centers offer dreams for success to ensure the employment rate for their graduates, she said.

"We can graduate a financial management student, but she can look around and realize there are no new hotels or restaurants being built. Or accommodations were emphasized. It's a condition [shared by] the rest of the country," Aguinaldo said.

She said BC also benefits from the "added competencies" that the new program offers students who are and graduate school students.

Apart from the edge offered by the elective once the same 800 student applies to Sitel, the firm's training center standards for technical skills, allowing her to match the job orders who graduated from nurses."

Aguinaldo said she offered the Sitel test course as a free elective by converting the 300-hour internship requirement for business students to 300 hour training with Intelligenes.

Aguinaldo said most university graduates would still want call centers as a rebuttle for short-term or transitional employment.

"This may explain the poor response to a special UC curriculum on call center technology and communication when the university offered it recently.

"We received the clearance from the Commission on Higher Education (Ch-ed)for this course, but when we opened, there were no takers," Aguinaldo said.

"Perhaps, it is not time to compete with call centers themselves, which also offer free training to job candidates in their academies," she said.

UB is exploring a full curriculum in voice call center courses, Resources, but it will be open to students enrolled in other fields of study, like political science.

"The idea is to offer political science students another way of applying their skills because there are no fewer job offerings for their profession," said a UB instructor who was raising those who prepared the curriculum.

BUSINESS Monday

Get ready for the rest of your life.

Underrated mining giant flexes muscles

Philex Mining on aggressive exploration mode

By Dexter L. Lozas

MINING STOCKS HAVE been hot picks with investors in recent months, both the speculative and serious kind.

Some stocks, in particular, have recorded spectacular price increases, rewarding those who have bet large and small dominoes on firms with little fundamentals to stand on.

Our mining issues, however, has remained largely below the radar of investors, despite it having among the strongest fundamentals in the market and the cheapest stock price relative to its actual and potential earnings.

Indeed, despite the growing interest in mining, the share price movement of publicly listed Philex Mining Corp. have yet to attract the attention of a broader set of buyers.

Second look

In a recent interview, however, Philex chairman/CEO Walter W. Brown outlined the direction of one of the country's oldest and largest mining firms that may force investors to take a second look.

Specifically, he laid out a set of projects that would help the company through the expected exhaustion of its existing precious metals reserves by 2016.

"We're fully covered until 2014, but we (also) have a lot of projects down the road," Brown said, explaining that the company's ability to profit from its existing mining operations will depend both on the quality of the remaining ore at its sites and the price of precious metals on the world market.

And with gold prices hurtling hit a 16-month high on the world market, investors are taking a closer look at mining stocks, including Philex, whose share price rose sharply—and quite unexpectedly—on the Philippine Stock Exchange last week.

During the interview, Brown revealed that Philex had already expressed its interest in setting up operations in the gold-rich Mount Diwalwal Mining Reservation.

He said that he had recently made his investors known to government authorities in charge of developing what is touted as the Philippines' richest gold mine.

Huge gold reserves

Mount Diwalwal in Compostela Valley is estimated to hold as much as $18 billion of gold reserves, according to the latest government estimates.

According to Brown, the company is uniquely positioned to develop the area and succeed where other mining firms have failed, despite the fact that the area is a hotbed of unrest, with small miners, indigenous people, local government and the military and rebel units fighting for control of the lucrative gold-producing operations.

"We are familiar with all the factors involved," he said. "We have been in the business for many years. We have the local network and we know the LGUs (local government units) and the indigenous people."

As far as farming Mt. Diwalwal into a profitable mining operation for all stakeholders goes, Brown said that as foreign company can match the experience that Philex has.

Aggressive program

With the continuing high metal prices, Philex said its gold subsidiary Philex Gold Inc. have embarked on an aggressive nationwide exploration program.

In Benguet, the company has started extensive exploration of the existing orebody and surrounding prospects.

Diamond drilling will be undertaken at the Sto. Tomas II orebody of the existing Padcal mine to possibly extend further the mine life.

Philex has programmed several known porphyry copper gold targets for exploration this year.

The Tampus prospect, 10 km to the southeast of the Padcal mine is currently drilling its second hole with some encouraging results.

Botac and Midway prospects, two major gold vein systems close to the existing Padcal mine are currently being explored and expected to provide additional ore to the company's existing mine.

Restarting operations

Other prospects in Luzon located in the provinces of Batangas, Bengasinan and Zambales will be explored once the permits are

UNDERRATED B4-5

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Former Bulacan governor sustains push for SMEs

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

THE GOVERNOR receives an SME Kanlaya Award.

CITY OF MALOLOS—THREE THREE ex-governors of Bulacan have failed to use the distance and dust to Aurelian Trail—Dr la Cruz.

After completing nine years of public service, this Ateneo de Manila University undergraduate engineering graduate has moved on to the private sector to sustain her advocacy for food economic development.

She rebuilt in the Bulacan Small Food Exchange (SMFE), a private enterprise where Dr la Cruz, 48, is the president.

"We want the private sector to give more jobs," Dr la Cruz said of the new state's goal during her presentation at the recent 2007 Public governance Forum children" Mabuti ko ang Filipinas" in Davao City.

Governance system

In that event, the BSFE was first turned as one of the successful organizations that had been initiated into the public governance system, a participatory approach introduced by the International Food Exhibition Inc Inter.

With little guidance, BSFE has outlined a roadmap to reaching its vision by 2017.

The BSFE, she said, "supports the province's vision of a stronger middle class."

"Our commitment is to improve the lives of our people. In Bulacan, our business is the [BSFE]. As an infrastructure, it is a strategic marketing and distribution depot that will enhance the distribution of goods and services in North Luzon. It will also showcase Philippine, Southeast Asian and global products," she said.

BSFE, she added, is also a "concrete application" of the model encouraged by the Foundation for People Development.

This model consolidates programs for people development like packaging services, cooperative needs, savings and insurance assistance and values education programs, PTE providers Food Bureau said.

In Bulacan's case, Dr la Cruz said the provincial government-private sector partnership during her time as governor included the groundwork for the BSFE.

The P65-million funding for the depot to be built in 2008 is a 20-hectare area in Bulacan town to donated by the provincial government and the private sector.

The national government, through the Department of Public Works and Highways, is constructing a P146-million interchange near the BSFE, also in 2008.

To complement these efforts, the provincial and local governments have extended the system by decreasing bureaucratic red tape through expanded cooperation in road property net information, computerized information, billing system, assessment operations and promotional programs.

Fertile ground

Programs like the BSFE find fertile ground in Bulacan because of the province's considerable economic and live consciousness.

In Bulacan, there are 1,079 registered cooperatives with 140,827 members. Their total assets amount to P5.299 billion and they have created at least 17,126 jobs.

Their products and services extend to 946,420 consumers or 40 percent of the province's population.

The province has 20,807 small and medium enterprises, making up 33 percent of those registered in the whole of Central Luzon.

Enterprises are considered micro if their capital is less than P3 million; small, up to P15 million; and medium, up to P100 million.

SMEs in Bulacan contributed P34 billion or 30 percent of the total investments in the region.

There generated 146,005 jobs or 36 percent of the region's total employment that year.

Still, the league of active exporters are at least 149 enterprises or 34.35 percent of the region's total SMEs.

Manufacturing textiles and leather items, furniture, jewelry and gifts and home decors and mostly food products, these enterprises are spread over the province's 23 towns and two cities.

To support micro, cottage and small entrepreneurs, the provincial government opened in September 2005 the Bulacan Packaging and Trading Center.

It provides label design, full packaging packaging materials and consultancy services.

The center is in the frontline of "Sinik Bulakenyo," which is the seal of quality for services and products of the province.

Agricultural development has been boosted through P824 million worth of support to farmers.

Farmers planting high value commercial crops have availed an additional income of P323,000/hectare every 100 square meters, Dr la Cruz said.

The provincial government went into investment promotions through outbound missions, trade fairs, buyer-seller meetings and other activities.

GOVERNOR Jonha Alvarez (right) hands over a check to a Bulacan entrepreneur who availed of the province's livelihood assistance program.

Dr la Cruz has since expanded the program to cover the entire province, including the establishment of a Bulacan Trade Center in Malolos.

"Our investments in people development are the best investments we can make," she said.

DE LA CRUZ: Ateneo graduate is a leading progressive

Backbone

The education and health sectors have undergone significant reforms.

The Project Joint Systems Improvement in Education, for instance, has raised mathematical skills in competitiveness and comprehension from both 30-40 percent in 2000 to 85.99 percent and 75.45 percent, respectively, in 2004-2005.

The Alay Pagkalinga expanded the health insurance coverage to the poorest of the poor so that they would not be deprived of medical care.

Dr la Cruz has since all these through the BSFE's "diversified strategy."

She said this puts together the packing business sector, lending, management and operations sector, cold storage sector and wholesale-market sector.

At the center of these is the "extensive application of information technology."

Altogether, these will cater to the retail network, export-import, business, tourism consumer management and exhibition sectors.

She said cooperatives for the BSFE will be geared more on the strengthening of cooperatives and SMEs.

The support of the provincial government is not lacking.

Dr la Cruz's younger brother Jonhha Josefus Hendricks, is the current governor.

In late June, she said "the programs were done more by the private sector. So, also, therefore, support long (I just give direction, support)."

Underrated mining giant flexes muscles

From page B1

granted," Brown said.

At the Victoria, Philex is currently evaluating the Bulawan gold deposit discovered in Sagadan, Negros Occidental with access to mapping the mine's expectations.

Exploration to find extension of the deposit is also programmed.

The mine has produced 465,566 equivalent ounces of gold from 1996 to 2002 and still has a current resource base of over 20 million tons at 1.9 g/t gold.

Mineralized and potentially significant gold resources exist in seven other gold prospects close to Bulawan and will be the subject of an aggressive exploration starting this year. Drilling at the Magsaysay prospect, 4 km to the southeast of Bulawan, will start this month.

A promising porphyry copper-gold target, the Daling prospect, 5 km southeast of the known Bigaday mine, is also expected to be explored this year.

Meanwhile, Brown said the Boyongan deposit located in Surigao del Norte, a Philex-Anglo American joint venture, is now in the prefeasibility stage.

Another joint venture property with the greatest promise, the Lascogan prospect in Philex-PRC Resources joint venture also located in Surigao del Norte where exploration of its Cardin Isle target is currently being undertaken.

More targets

Two more targets within the Lascogan Project are also scheduled to be evaluated this year.

According to Brown, Philex is also currently evaluating several properties in Mindanao.

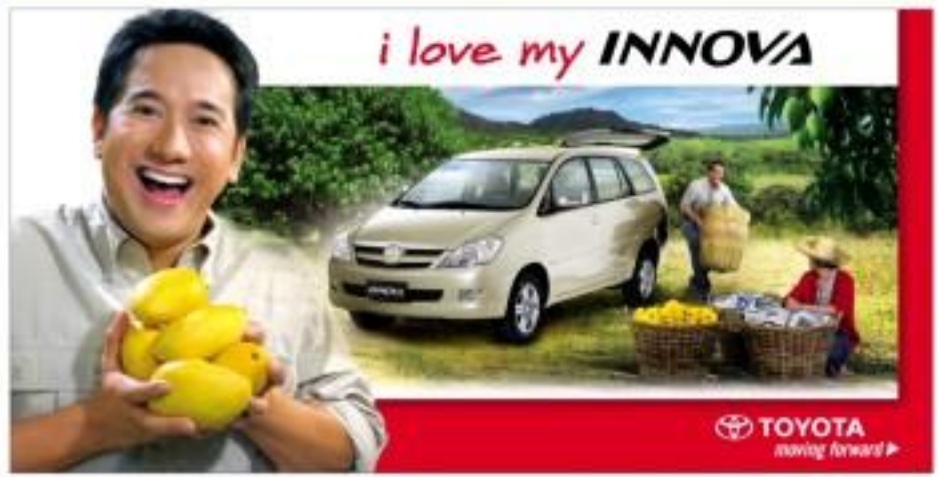
Specifically, a wholly owned property with an area of approximately 18,000 hectares with an exploration permit application located in Surigao del Sur is scheduled to be evaluated in 2008.

The company placed under care and maintenance its Silangan Project in Dumanjug del Monte a few years back but will continue to do exploration in the area while maintaining the facilities and its environment.

"The company's priorities remain to expand known deposits, to ensure the known targets on its properties systematically and where appropriate, continue to investigate and acquire properties of merit," Brown said.

Trading at only five times its price-earnings multiple for 2007 and three times its ratio for next year, the stock is easily the most undervalued mining firm on the PSE today.

If the company's ventures succeed, however, it may not stay that way for long.



Disturbing tax proposals

By Raul G. Balita
Contributor

I AM WRITING THIS TO DETTER our leaders in the executive and legislative branches of government, as well as our leaders in the private sector, because unless we entertain a holistic and out-of-the-box solution to address the continuing budget deficit, we cannot make [illegible] history and move the country forward as a fairer [illegible].

BIR's current tax system

The country's current tax system can be characterized in two simple words: complicated and uncompetitive. It is complicated because it is difficult to comply with and enforce. It is uncompetitive because the rates are high compared with other East Asian countries and the income tax superstructure.

If we go back 40 years ago and describe the tax system then, it is simply global, a global tax system in a tax system where all types of income are combined and subject to the single rate or to graduated rates.

In other words, both ordinary income arising from employment, business and practice of profession, and passive income like interest income from savings and time deposits, capital gains from sale of real property or shares of stock are all reported income income taxpayers, and are subject rates is applied on the tax base.

In that time, business, commercial and property transactions and dealings were very simple.

Today business structures and dealings have become very complex. Corporate organizations have different layers of shareholdings and engage in different types of business transactions. Likewise, personal individual transactions have become so complex as businesses.

Hence, the difficulty of both preparing on the part of taxpayers and monitoring on the part of tax officers of the various types of income earned.

Because of these difficulties and complexities, the government over the years, had passed reported tax laws to capture the new and various types of income, but in the process have changed the tax landscape of the country from being purely global to a mixed global and schedular tax system.

A schedular tax system is another tax system that treats different types of income differently, making them subject to different rates and at different tax bases, either as gross or net.

The 20 percent final withholding tax on interest income arising from savings and time deposits is an example of a schedular type of tax. This was introduced to capture the interest income of depositors who are protected by the Bank Secrecy Law.

Stock and final tax rates were also introduced on various types of capital gains like sale of shares of stocks and real properties classified as capital assets. Minimum corporate income tax was also introduced to obligate consistently losing companies to pay a certain minimum amount of tax.

An inheritance or estate tax is another area of taxation that has become very controversial because government and the industry players cannot simply agree on an acceptable tax.

The laws were not limited to changing the tax policies but also tax administrations. The creation of the large taxpayer's office as directed by IMF is one of the most noticeable.

The control of the filing of tax fraud cases with the courts being transferred from the fifth to [illegible] and the Internal Revenue Code from the latest addition to the tax administrative charges.

To date, we have more than 300 tax laws enacted by virtue of Presidential Decrees and Republic Acts. While some of these laws have contributed in improving the processes of reporting and monitoring, which resulted in the increase in revenue collection on certain types of tax, on the whole, it only complicated the tax system and therefore tax compliance and tax enforcement have become more difficult.

Capacity of the revenue agency

When we look at the capacity of the revenue agency, immediately we must examine its resources and institutional competency.

Historically, if we look at the annual budget of the BIR, it is less than one percent of its revenue collections. This is not commensurate to its gargantuan task of collecting the bulk of total revenue collections.

There were even occasions in the past where the annual fees paid to BIR are much more than the annual budget of the BIR.

If we use this as a measurement of capacity, then the annual budget of the revenue agency is grossly inadequate. We will leave the same conclusion if we compare it with the budget of revenue agencies in the Asian region.

Our complicated tax system has affected the tax processes and consequently impacted on the institutional competency of the tax agency. Because of its inadequate budget and certain limitations attached to it, the agency is unable to put the necessary tools to improve its tax efficiency.

For the same reasons, technical training is not also a priority. The regular training that the agency provides is not the type of training that really enhances the individual competencies of revenue officers and improves their effectiveness. Because of the salary standardization in government, the agency is not an employer of choice of new graduates.

Thus, the agency is unable to replenish the vast computation of its present workforce. The lack of resources, the declining number of motivated and competent workforce and the absence of accountability measurement system have affected and will continue to affect the institutional capacity of the agency.

Where do we go from here?

Tax revenue accounts for almost 85 percent of our national revenue and the BIR collects almost 80 percent of this tax revenue. Of the 20 percent that the BIR collects, 60 percent are internal revenue taxes like VAT. If the government wants to improve its revenue, it should start with the BIR.

The tax system has two facets: Tax administration and tax policy. Tax administration pertains to the process of collecting taxes and tax policy defines what taxes to collect. The BIR and the BOC are responsible for tax administration and the Department of Finance is responsible for identifying tax policy. Overhauling the tax system means restructuring tax administration and reforming tax policy.

Taxation has two phases namely: Compliance and enforcement. To have an efficient and effective tax system, a balance of the two is essential. However, since 98 percent of internal revenue collections come from voluntary compliance, the focus should be more on compliance.

Despite the tax system, the reality is for taxpayers to comply with and also for revenue agency to enforce. We will discuss the major weaknesses of the tax system and suggest solutions to address them.

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue is hard-pressed to meet its collection target this year.

One complicated tax system has affected the tax processes and consequently impacted on the institutional competency of the tax agency. Because of its inadequate budget and certain limitations attached to it, the agency is unable to put the necessary tools to improve its tax efficiency.

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Foundation

These principles should serve as the foundation in redesigning the new tax system and overhauling the tax law code.

Secondly, organize a group from both the public and private sectors to jointly undertake this monumental project.

Addressing this problem requires the involvement and participation of other key stakeholders. The value and the views of the private sector must be heard and considered because they are the sector that would be mostly affected and covered by the changes.

Third, once a new tax code is crafted and developed for legislation, the tax agency should also develop new tax processes, and rules and regulations to make it operational. The success of any legislation is in its implementation and enforcement. Better and improved tax compliance will materialize only if tax requirements, processes and rules are simple and fair.

Finally, reinvent the tax agency to provide meaningful organizational support to the changes and improve the delivery of tax services to taxpayers.

We need a new tax agency that is taxpayer-focused. We need to modernize tax administration and possibly make it independent to enable it to make its own decisions.

Unless we address the core of the problem, budget surplus will never become a reality.

The author is a professor of Taxation and Corporate Governance at the Ateneo Graduate School and former Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

RAPU RAPU Processing Inc. (RPPI), a subsidiary of Lafayette Philippines Inc. (LPI), formally presented its ISO 14001:2004 certificate to Environment Secretary Lito Atienza (2nd from left). The certification recognizes the project's environmental management system (EMS) as being at par with international standards. With Atienza are company officials led by LPI chair and president Carlos G. Dominguez (right).

Cisco targets new markets

By Rita T. Olchondra

CISCO PHILIPPINES IS SET TO put more focus on non-traditional market sectors such as tourism, real estate and construction.

"The tourism industry is an exciting new market for us," Cisco Philippines manager Lizelle Robles said, citing a recent study from the Whirlpool Business Forum as basis for the Cisco prospects.

The study projects a growth in tourist arrivals of 14 percent a year and over $1 billion in investments in hotels and resorts for this year alone.

To take advantage of the opportunity, Cisco Philippines will introduce the Cisco Connected Real Estate (CCRE) solution for the ITMC sectors.

The CCRE, specifically tailored for individuals and companies that create and operate real estate, promotes the "network as the platform," a concept that is expected to enable firms to increase revenues, reduce costs and improve customer service.

"This intelligent building infrastructure creates an unprecedented opportunity for improved services, enhanced processes, and cost effective operations," Robles said.

Meanwhile, Cisco continues to offer top-of-the-line networking solutions with its Data Center and Unified Communications solutions.

The Data Center architecture places more of the workload onto the network through consolidation, virtualization and unified fabric technologies.

It also collapses the functions of standalone devices into modules to help customers save on rack space, cabling, port consumption and support costs in addition to reducing power consumption.

Asia-Pacific managing director for Data Center Saint Andre Beit said Cisco was working on its First Green Data Center project in the Philippines.

"It may even qualify be a showcase for a secure connectivity that utilizes rich collaboration between two companies of different geographies, different industries and with different business processes," he said.

Unified Communications is another focus area for Cisco. The system is a suite of voice, data and video products and applications specifically designed to help organizations of all sizes to communicate more effectively.

It also allows customers to integrate their communication system with their IT infrastructure to make their businesses perform more effectively.

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BUSINESS Monday

Farmers now net surfers

Learning through the Internet now within easy reach

By Amy R. Remo

GONE ARE THE DAYS when Filipino farmers were about their work with bare feet, looking scrawny in stained, tattered clothes.

As today's farmer starts to ride on the technology wave, he now tinkers with modern equipment and is slowly acquiring knowledge through the information-rich cyberspace.

Various farming technologies have already been made available.

This is evident in some of the 4.8 million farms around the country, covering about 8.7 million hectares of land.

Internet programs

Farmers can also freely make use of the Department of Agriculture's "Open Academy for Philippine Agriculture."

There they can do "Mobile Internet Bar," which is a service delivery online services, and "Farmers' Information and Technology Service Centers."

Now, farmers are slowly reaping gainful satisfaction of which are the educational benefits.

Just last month, 17 agricultural extension workers and farmers graduated from the one-and-a-half (month) online training course on Mass-One-Element Technique (MOET), an easy way to diagnose nutrients deficiency in the soil.

Implemented by the Philippine Rice Research Institute, the online course is a component project of the Open Academy for Philippine Agriculture Program.

Opaga is a network of government institutions that provide education, training and communication in agriculture using ICTs.

Unlike the traditional training program, the e-learning project uses both conventional and electronic media such as online modules, forums and chats, instant messaging, and field practicum to reach farmers.

The participants, mostly from the Science City of Muñoz and Cabanatuan City, completed the course by attending a series of online conferences/discussions, as well as conducting an actual SMART setup.

"What they liked most was the interaction with fellow AEWs and online expert," e-learning coordinator Reinar U. Zapata said.

Open academy

The e-learning modules served as learning materials, with guide questions posted on the site for students to answer.

Pulitico said this learning format is expected to enhance real-time online discussions among students coming from different places and subjects.

The online forum allows students to leave questions for the expert to answer at any given time.

Meanwhile, a field activity marks the application of knowledge gained from the online course.

Participants are expected to evaluate the e-learning program—from content to system operations—to improve the e-learning project, which will be offered regularly next year, as part of the PhilRice Training Program.

Aside from MOET, another course, "How to make the Philippine Rice Shell Strain," is also accessible at www.opa.net.ph.

The Opaga Advisory Council had already recommended that this system should be used as the common e-learning platform not only for rice but also for other crops.

PhilRice Executive Director Leocadio S. Sebastian earlier said they also envision the center to provide a learning option for farmers, cooperatives and other various farmer groups.

"We understand that [farmers] lack the resource to attend our onsite training programs," Sebastian said. "With this e-learning project, we hope to facilitate learning at a minimal cost, despite geographical disparity."

Increasing productivity

For its part, the DA has also been making good use of the Internet and modern technology to help increase agricultural productivity and raise farmers' income.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said he and the DA plans to put up electronic kiosks and create an e-portal system to connect various computer centers, which would be set up around the country.

In these centers, farmers can check market prices of their commodities and seek business partnerships using the Internet.

"These kiosks should be servers driven so that farmers would use them," Yap said. "If a farmer asks, sure are you help? Can we talk and reach out to other farmers? Can we create new markets through this? The answers must be yes."

The DA, Microsoft Corp. and the Department of Science and Technology met early this year to explore possible collaborations in the hope of leveraging the success of Microsoft's Information and Communications Technology partnership with Microsoft.

Microsoft is also set to discuss how it can partner with Opaga and other ICT projects for Philippine agriculture.

"Microsoft can greatly help efforts to modernize Philippine agriculture by providing computers, licensed Microsoft software and training for computer programmers," Yap said.

Ultimately, the modernization of Philippine agriculture could very well translate to higher incomes for Filipino farmers and better living conditions for their families.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Cinderella Fermoso Subsection Editor Lira B. Zalvan

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS

NEW: Illustrator and a recluse of her choice and benefactor) working on the intricate embroidery of the Virgin's cape, which is 12 ft long and 7 ft wide

La Naval gets a resplendent new gown for the centennial of her papal coronation

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Text and photos by Gino U. Marasigan
Contributor

ON OCT. 4, THE PHILIPPINE Church and the entire Dominican family will celebrate the centennial of the canonical coronation of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, La Naval de Manila.

For this once-in-a-lifetime occasion, a very special dress is being made since February and is now on the final stages of embroidery. It will be ready for the commemoration of 100 years of the Filipinos' love and devotion for the Queen of the Holy Rosary.

On Oct. 3, 1907, His Holiness Pope Pius X declared the venerated image was a bearer of faith and hope for the Filipino people, and recognized the miraculous favor and favor granted to her devotees.

On that day, a huge crowd gathered in various places at Plaza de Isabel II, Paseo de Magallanes, Plaza de Santo Tomas, Plaza de Santo Domingo, and Intramuros in Intramuros—to witness the canonical coronation. It was the first papally approved coronation of a Marian icon in the history of the Philippine Church.

For that occasion, the image wore a magnificent gold-embroidered robe with the signature papaya-leaf design and a gilt-silver pluvial (mantle) which is still in use today.

The robes, offerings from *el pueblo fiel* (pious), were locally tailored using fine material and ballroom trash from Europe.

In an atelier in the metropolis is meticulously designed and exquisitely crafted dress, being given the final touches by a team of 10 women and needlepoint workers.

After almost seven months of intricate and intricate needlework under the supervision of the Secretariat, Nena Bautista, interweaving vines, palm fronds, and garlands of rose have come to life.

The original design by Arthur Mauna left virtually an empty space on the knee front. To distinguish one floral figure from the other elements of the design, Bautista used a mix of metallic and genuine Indian gold tassel threads (because of its warm, like appearance).

Millimeter by millimeter, thread by thread, the dress is being fashioned to perfection.

The exquisite apparel is a gift to Our Lady of La Naval by the family of Eddie Gloss. Through the years, many benefactors and Marian devotees have offered gifts to Our Lady in the form of heirloom jewelry or gala dresses, as tokens of gratitude.

Some gifts easily come to mind, such as the Coronation dress, also known as the rosary dot, which was worn in the 1950s and

READ NEXT ▷

THE VISION: Unique and diverse designed by Arthur Mauna and associates perfection

EDDIE Gloss, donor of La Naval's centennial dress

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PRIDE OF PLACE
Augusto Villalon

Escape city blues at Montecito and Hacienda Escudero

Two new developments highlight modern Filipino architecture

TWO LUXURY DEVELOPMENTS TO watch are Hacienda Escudero near San Pablo City in Quezon, and Montecito in Cumbokong, Laguna, both surrounding but each demonstrating a different approach to offering quiet getaways from city life.

Hacienda Escudero offers the reassuring comfort of Filipino tradition.

Covering the area around 900s farmlots, the venerable tourist destination that successfully pioneered the concept of an all-Filipino resort, the mixed-use development retains the old Filipino flavor that has made the Escudero resort so popular.

The Escuderos family and Landco Pacific are jointly developing 415 hectares of plantation land into a residential resort community that takes its cues from the resort's historic home Pinoy charm.

In the halcyon days of the 1930s Philippine Commonwealth era, the plantation was recognized as probably the most progressive, innovative coconut plantation in the country. Its forward-thinking was the Escuderos patriarch that he installed one of the first hydroelectric plants in the country, harnessing the lakes in the hacienda property to produce power for machineries agricultural processing.

The modern development takes its identity from the Escudero family vision and their legacy.

When completed, Hacienda Escudero will have hotels, spas, medical facilities, shopping and restaurant facilities, and leisure facilities that include a golf course, tennis park and botanical gardens winding throughout the development.

Completely 218 ordinary Filipinos in attitude, new houses are to be designed in Modern-Filipino style, contemporary architecture based on surviving plantation houses from the 1930s Commonwealth era that are typical to the San Pablo area.

Together with Montecristo de Cebu, another Landco development, Hacienda Escudero is one of the few new developments that champions Modern Filipino architecture.

Hacienda Escudero, designed to bring back traditional neighborhood values, is people-friendly, encouraging homes to have verandas face the street to give residents opportunities to interact with each other.

Villa Escudero, a plantation house in the 1930s Philippine Commonwealth era style, is the centerpiece of the new Hacienda Escudero development in Quezon province.

AT MONTECITO in Cumbokong, Laguna, the central attraction is a series of large bodies of water that irrigate the development's landscaping and keep temperatures at cool level.

Walking is another way to get neighbors together. Parks and farmers ring clusters of houses, all linked by pedestrian walkways.

Getting around by motor is another feature. Choice Hacienda Escudero properties either have their own access to the freeway or take or open up to specially built watermotes, allowing convenience of mooring within laksods less for privately owned boats.

Laguna sanctuary

An abundance of water and freshest greenery is the first impression at Montecristo, an upscale community slightly over an hour's drive from Manila.

A portion of the vast Cumbokong sugar estate has been turned into a development of generously sized lots surrounded by lesser-to-fresh greenways, roads, lakes and recreational areas that create not only a strong feel of peace and serenity but also provides a powerful connection to nature.

The environment at Montecito is definitely green. Nature is so important that approximately 60 percent of its area has been given over to ecumenical open space.

A spring originating in Tagaytay Ridge, called Mariang Tubig (Eye of the Water), runs through the property, supplying water for residents, landscape irrigation and powering a mini-hydroelectric plant which generates electricity to light up the streets eventually flowing into a large, fish-stocked lake in the property.

Residents are offered the opportunity to recharge from the pressures of city life in a tightly guarded, secure environment with unpolluted air and an intimate, landscaped interiorities.

From the height of its rolling hills, the Montecito perspective provides just a panorama of its designer landscapes to include the vistas of Mt. Makiling, Taguitay Ridge and Laguna de Bay.

Intimacy among neighbors is achieved by the low density development, where a total area of 60 ha accommodates only 218 houses, offering residents easy access to space beyond the boundaries of their properties.

Majority of Montecito lots are designed with a border of open space on all sides. No houses are ever adjacent to each other. Green conveyards, greenways, and "open sides" effectively buffer houses from each other and provide a lessen of shared public areas for neighbors.

Model houses, designed around a series of courtyards that allow indoor and outdoor spaces to interpenetrate, are surrounded by manicured lawns, banks of flowering plants, and lush fruit bearing trees all grown in Montecito's on-site private plant and tree nursery.

Montecito is the place for its residents to recharge themselves.

Whether it is high-end exclusivity at Montecito or the comforting familiarity of Pinoy traditions at Hacienda Escudero, lifestyle choices are interesting for those seeking refuge from the stresses of city life.

Visit www.haciendaescudero.com and www.montecito.com.ph

Email comments to pride.place@gmail.com

Jun Alfon mounts homecoming show in Davao

JUN ALFON, ACCLAIMED for his exotic and colorful depiction of Mindanao tribes, comes back to his roots, Davao, to mount a homecoming one-man show, his 20th, "Mystical and Magical Mindanao IV."

Opening ceremonies will be held Sept. 28 at Mt Carlin Te Casita Art Gallery (owned by Mary Ann Ambrosio), Diamin Building, Quirapo Boulevard, Davao.

Getting the ribbon will be three generations of prominent art lovers: Patricia Montemayor, his daughter Maryanne "Ruby" Montemayor, and granddaughter Shaiya Montemayor Negrales.

"Mystical and Magical Mindanao IV" will feature a collection of boldly portrayed lyrical paintings of the tribal people of the South.

This collection eloquently combines imaginative and interpretation as it captures the mystical aura of southern tribes such as the Tiboli, Bagobos, Higaonons, and Maranaos.

"Although they are almost forgotten, they are an important art we see," says Alfon. "I capture them on canvas so that others may know they are breathing, walking beings—albeit generally unknown—with arbors we covet. Their warmth and natural nuances move me every time I am among them."

After three successive solo exhibits in Manila, Alfon decided to bring "Mystical and Magical Mindanao IV" to the place where he grew up and his subjects live.

In this exhibit, Alfon characteristically demonstrates depth in capturing the indigenous people's inner strength, love for colors, and capacity to reach out to others.

Alfon has been featured in art books such as Encyclopedia of Philippine Art by Marlene Aguilar; "20th-Century Contemporary Art," and "Gallery of the Philippines" by Dick Voortmans.

To keep the theme for posterity, his paintings will be captured in prints and photographs in a book written by Inez Gine Palanca awardee Grace Sweeney-Cheng. It will be launched before the year ends.

"MYSTICAL and Magical Mindanao IV" consists of oil renditions of Mindanao folk scenes and motifs.

"BASTOS con Dinoline"

"DISASTER Iost Disco"

Artist's talk-performance at St. Scholastica

THE LOPEZ MEMORIAL MUseum and the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communications (UP CMC) present the third "Obra Maestra Museum" series, featuring performance artist Yason Banal Sept. 23, 2 p.m., in Dr. Cardinal Bartolo Hall, St. Scholastica's College in Manila.

His talk, subtitled "An Experimental Lecture Probing Ronald McDonald, Metrosexuality and the Museum," is a mix of artist slide shows, lectures and performance.

Banal's works have explored the idea of icons—how they are created, how they acquire and survive. The artist himself said, "Creating an Icon themselves, people who have become icons eventually become concepts, the ideas fished by a libel of its own, particularly visual culture."

"What these concepts are and the visual culture that creates are some of the things tackled in this talk-cum performance.

The lecture complements the ongoing exhibition at the Lopez Museum, "Obra a Dozen," which runs until Sept. 22.

Free entrance but reservation required since seating is limited. For more information, contact Pansy at 6312417 or visit www.lopezmuseum.org.ph.

"LEGEND of Disappearing Trivia"

The Queen's coronation gown

From page C1

THE MINO'S bib and gown

Embroidered in Spain using gold threads.

In the 1960s, a quite unique dress was made in Hetrare, using an Oriental motif, and was worn by the image in a pandiwa that adorns the Quiapo basilica.

A pink-and-blue dress, given by the family of Dr. Belarmino and Nancy Morelos, is usually worn by the Virgin in May.

A complete ensemble using gold thread for the Means and Alter was given by Dr. Joey and Cherry Sullano in 1993.

For Bernales and her family, the opportunity to wear the Virgin's dress for such an important occasion as the centennial of the canonical coronation is not just an honor and a privilege, but truly the fulfillment of a lifetime dream. As a teenage girl, she chose to stay indoors during her delicate, gumdrop-edginess for her mother's gallivanting years, half hoping that one day she, too, would have the chance to offer something beautiful to the Virgen de La Naval.

For details of the activities to mark the Centennial of the Canonical Coronation of La Naval next month, call Santo Domingo Church at 7326571-72. Donations are still being accepted.

VISUAL ARTS

Francisco at Philamlife

Carlos "Totoy" Francisco II presents his 7th solo exhibit, "Mind's Eye: Retail Moods," Sept. 14-28 in Philamlife Building, UN Avenue, Manila. The exhibit will showcase 25 paintings on a number of themes with complex color, mostly done in acrylic on canvas. Call 5215000.

3 artists at Crucible

The Crucible Gallery (4/F Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City) presents a three-man show "Public Scene," Sept. 11-17, featuring the works of Lui Antinio, Jayvy Soriano and Mike Pobadora. The artists will obsess in their works the appreciation of commercial living. Call 6356061.

Mula and Bautista at Ayala

"Veins and Spaces," a collaborative exhibit of Mula and Aaron Bautista, runs on Sept. 13-27 in Artinformal (2/F, Glass Wing, Ayala Museum, Greenbelt Park, Makati). The shows focuses on the vibrant passages of colors and lines that burst out of the canvas surface. Forms are easily perceived and spaces are lovingly manipulated. Call 757-7117 to 21 local 31, 33.

"BLEND," by Aaron Bautista

"SUMMER Storm," by Mula Bautista

Tanay artists at MGB

Tanay-based artists will exhibit their works in acrylic Orientals Gallery (3/F Ibn Rehabilitation Center, North Wing Bldg., 368 Mall of Asia). Dubbed "Sa Pelgid Natin" features realistic renderings of breathtaking landscapes, exhibit gardens, still lifes and the artists' familiar surroundings. Participating artists include Howard Jao, Leo Mendoza, Bandi Bali, Mauro Sinquenco and Conrado Bonifacio. Call 8811523/8817 or 8885988. The exhibit runs until Sept. 15.

Cobangbang at Magnani

Lorna Cobangbang's new works will be on display at Bldg and Gallery (Ilgner Bldg., 339 Katipunan Ave., QC) Sept. 11-25, in "All That Glitters Needs Beauty." Revelations are stances of assembled objects, making them more appealing at the same time toward the disruption of details all over the objects, somehow we go back to the deliberate process of making things simple, forgetting what is. Call 8906191.

"SAMAP Mamitas," by Howard Jao

Dolls at Museo Pambata

The Nitang Family Doll Collection is now on display at the Children in the Global Village section of Museo Pambata (Roxas Boulevard and South Drive, Manila). Donated by Dr. Cecilia Besangco Cruz's family, the collection showcases over 100 dolls of different nations, as well as trikes and cast-iron miniatures. Call 5214159.

Pacquing at Finale

Inspired by the superhero drawings of his son—who, at six years old, is oddly aware of how its physician extraordinary strength on a page—Bernardo Pacquing comes up with a suite of works of mad people who orbit his life, investigating and abstracting them to highlight "the extraordinary things they do." Dubbed simply as "People I Know" on view at the Finale Art File (4/F Lufi Center, Paseo Roxas and Makati Avenue, Makati), the exhibit showcases his subjects as superheroes of their own, "meaning presences who project an aura of invulnerability. On view until Sept. 30. Call 8132310 or visit www.finaleartfile.com.

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Published in "Increasingly Safe and Successful Pregnancies". Proceedings on the 27th International Congress on Pathophysiology of Pregnancy, pp. 275-276, by Elsevier Science B.V. Nov. 1994 to May 1995

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Life Member, International Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology

Life Member, Philippine Medical Association

Pilita and Martin Bring Back Timeless Classics at the SM Mall of Asia

From September 7-16, the SM Mall of Asia turns back the hands of time as it stages "Timeless Classics Festival, a fitting tribute to grandparents as they celebrate their special day.

"Timeless Classics Festival highlights include a special concert from the ageless Asia's Queen of Songs, entitled "Pilita in Concert" on September 15, 7PM at the Main Mall Atrium.

Pilita Corrales graces the SM Mall of Asia stage for the first time with her repertoire of Spanish, English and Filipino love songs that will surely evoke romantic memories from the mature audiences.

Joining Pilita is Yeo Wing Chu, Angel Rodgers and Nikki Ross, known for their dance and comic routines that have spiced up their successful shows both here and abroad.

On September 16, it's the turn of the country's top balladeer and concert king to take shoppers down memory lane as he launches his latest album, "Milestones." Marking his 50th year in the music industry, Martin will perform selected songs from "Milestones" in a free concert at 5PM at the Main Mall Atrium.

Shoppers will be serenaded with classic from a collection of the best ballads spanning 25 years of Martin's romance repertoire. "Milestones" by EMI Pirie, brings back the hits of Manny Manalac's "Somewhere Down The Road," Jose Mari Chan's "Beautiful Girl," Ella Mae Saison's "Till My Heartaches End," Arsy Segueritz's "Paglalakbay Ng Panahon," Jimmy Borullo's "Let Me Be The One" and more of the songs you wanted to hear all over again. Martin's album tour caps Pilita's biggest week this "Big, Big Week of Asia."

There will be several other exciting events such as the Homebuyers Fashion Launch, presenting the hottest gear in town from the world's coolest designers on September 15-16 at the Music Hall.

The Old Mall of Asia's "Timeless Classic Festival is truly a grand treat for the young and old.

Sotheby's auction set for Sept. 16

"UNUP Human" by Anita Magsaysay-Ho

TWENTY-SIX ARTWORKS FROM 13 artists mark the Philippine participation in the forthcoming Sotheby's auction of Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Paintings. It is slated for Sept. 16, at the Shaw Ballroom of Regent of Singapore at 1 Cuscaden Road.

This auction is a much-awaited auction with Sotheby's offering 176 lots from the classics of Southeast Asia and top contemporary artists. For this auction, there are three Amorsolos, two paintings by Anita Magsaysay-Ho, one Manansala, three works from Arturo Luz, a Cesar Legaspi and a Florin Abad.

From the contemporary artists, there are two works by Ronald Ventura, two by Manuel Ocampo, one by Shena Garcia, two by Winner Jocson, one by BL Cruzada and one by Federico Guzo III.

Interested parties who may want to participate in the auction can visit www.sothebys.com and go to the category auction calendar looking for the Sept. 16 auction of Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Paintings.

Bidding can also be done by submitting an absentee bid form by mail, by telephone or by recalling at the Sotheby's auction and bidding by e-mail. Call 66-47328209.

"BOXES and Birds" by Arturo Luz

"BOOKSON Eternal Lady" by Jocson

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CLAUDE TAYAG

The coming together of palate and palette

"KAKAANIN Vendor, Marawi Market"

"TOBACCO Mull, Lake Sebu"

"HANGINGAN, Lake Sebu"

"MIRIENDA Vendor, Marawi"

By Karla P. Delgado
Contributor

AT FIRST WOMAN MAKES EYE contact, customer with having bought some of the best-selling scenes at Lake Sebu Market. The painter has captured her happy eyes and the exuberant of the shadows in her native hair.

A smiling lady in a colorful T'boli headscarf stretches her arm, palm open, waiting for her purchase of tobacco leaves. In another corner of the lake, a man wades into a kangkungan to harvest fistfuls of the gently leafy green. The waters reflect the sky, lily pads face up.

These are the scenes of Philippine life recorded by artist Claude Tayag, who has brought together his passion for painting, eating and traveling in "Palate/Palette: A Watercolor Travelogue" at the Alliance Française de Manille.

For most of the food trips (post mortem), Claude had his wife, Mary Ann Quiaoit-Tayag, as his traveling companion.

"I knew it was serious in falling in love with Mary Ann the first time he cooked for her. He made Hainanese chicken rice. 'She devoured it with lots of chili and gusto,' he recalls. "That is one hot lady who can eat, I thought."

The couple has made it a lifelong mission to eat their way across the Philippines, so to speak. From Marawi's markets an appearance in the exhibit, with the artist serving as an authoritative as the deep-fried morsels and the bakas fish which distinguish the Marawi City Market.

Using a predominantly wood-stained angle, particularly cubist in influence, and geometric in rendering, the artist shows his partiality to the angular form, emphasizing the inner strength of the figure while at the same time showing suppleness and grace in the patient delineation. While highlighting the quiet and restrained nature of repose, as in "Soulmates" and "Contemplation," he eschews the trite and trivial theories and instead opens up a multiplicity of meanings and the wealth of perspectives that can be observed in these figures.

"CONTEMPLATION"

"MOTHER and CHILD"

The use of Chua's sculptures radiates a feeling of intimacy between viewer and object, as these works are meant for close viewing. The distinctive coming up-close by the artist in retaining the viewing textures of his wood speaks highly of his lofty sense of artistry and his emphasis on exploring off-pedestal, less traditional mediums.

Chua has another body of work in acrylic, all rendered in the style of abstract expressionism. These paintings are stunning in their applications of color and palette, revealing the untamed, if questionable, side of the artist whose journey must be complete without taking personal risks with his choice of concept and imagery. Using colors that can indeed be characterized—with greens and yellows—and brushwork that is brisk, bold and brazen in application, Chua is proving to all and sundry that he is himself a work in progress.

Seb Chua's intimate sculptures

ARTS ART COLLECTOR AND SUCCESSFUL businessman, Seb Chua has become an artist himself, turning an erstwhile hobby into a passion for sculpture and painting. Last month, he unveiled his first solo exhibit titled "Fractal Visions," at the Artesia Gallery in the Art Walk of SM Megamall. His exhibition runs until Sept. 15.

With an extensive background in product research and design, the idea of exploring forms, both hidden and manifest, was a constant source of stimulus for Chua. As a Xavier school alumnus who pursued studies at the University of Sto. Tomas and Columbia College in Vancouver, Canada, he was smitten by the structure, allowing his subjects to emphasize comfort and suggest space.

As a budding sculptor, he had set his mind on experimenting with bronze, marble and brass as mediums, and later casting his figures. In business, the dearth of professional sculptors in the art scene, and the lack of space for showcasing their work prompted him and his partners to open Artesia at SM Megamall a few years ago.

Upon the prodding of his friends, he joined the Annual Competition of the Art Association of the Philippines where he submitted his sculpture, "Solitude," which won the judges' nod for honorable mention.

For his first solo show, Chua has lined up a total of 18 timeless one-sculptures, majority of which explore the human figure, in his signature stylized bronze medium and marble casting. The wide variety of colors—primarily white, green, and reddish brown hues—shows Chua's endless exploration of mediums. The imagery yields a wealth of the artist's multi-faceted examination into the internal states of the human condition.

Balisi's edifice complex

By Jessica Zafra and Ariel Rubillos
Contributor

AT FIRST GLANCE, THE OIL on canvas "A Little Bit on the Shoulder" may bring to mind Japanese street-teen (salary-men) commuting to work on speed trains. The somber dresses and painter's image are almost identical and only in their dark suits but also in their buttoned strides.

Upon closer inspection, however, the men in the painting by artist Jay Balisi appear to be wearing armor coats with scars and wrinkles that have an old fashioned European flair. Like air about them. They are seated closely together as if on a crowded train.

Twin the glass windows behind them, a row of buildings peep out from between their shoulders. Only their tops are visible as the rest of their faces are cropped off the upper edge of the canvas.

Though the title may jive with the Japanese-inspired vignette of an unconventional, the piece is only one in a collection that is accompanied by "A song on the End of the World," a poem by Nobel laureate Czeslaw Milosz:

On the day the world ends/ A lion circles a stream,/ A fisherman mends a glimmering net,/ Happy porpoises jump in sea sea,/ By the aerospace testing sportsmen are playing./ And the wealthy is gold-skinned as it should always be.//

"BEST Days"

On the day the world ends/ Women walk through the fields under their umbrellas,/ A drunkard grows deeply at the edge of a town,/ Separable peddlers chase in the street/ And a yellow-tailed boat comes nearer the island,/ The voice of a violin lasts in the air/ And leads into a starry night.//

And those who expected lightning and thunder/ Are disappointed. And those who expected signs and archangels' trumpets/ Do not believe it is happening now./ As long as the sun and the moon are above,/ As long as the heartbeat rises a note,/ As long as my love infinite are born,/ My one believes it is happening now.//

Only a white-haired old man, who would be a prophet/ Yet is not a prophet, for he's meek too busy,/ Repeats what he hears his tormentor. His error and ephemeral world storyline,/ His entire end of the world will there be.

"OUT of the House and Into the World of White"

Renditions of structures

The body of works titled "Neighborhood" features mostly old buildings or portions of them. It is exhibited in Bistro at Uptown Tower in Makati's bel-air Village.

In fact, only the pieces has detailed figures. The rest are renditions of concrete structures seen in half-light, either at dusk or at dawn. Some of them seem abandoned, hollow in appearance.

"Best Days" and "Thirteenth" show edifices whose windows look like holes on the concrete walls reminiscent of those in biblical cities where houses were smothered. Sometimes rebate entrances were simple arched openings.

Here, Balisi uses his own circle of light, as he renders brightness that is restricted within, glowing only around the Jacuzzian windows and doors, but not emanating from them.

Empty but flooded

The irony stands clear. The buildings are empty yet they are flooded with light inside. Ironic, too, but at the same time possibly apt, in the poem's reference to animals, active people, beings and nature, when most of them is present in the artworks.

It is possible that the artist has read Milosz's writing literally, meaning "the end of the world" has brought about the absence of living beings and consequently results in empty streets and houses (or, for that matter, the empty bridge in "Green Waters"), or he has taken on the task of condemning the Holocaust, which the Polish writer himself had witnessed and railed against in his Nobel lecture, arguing that it not simply be forgotten.

Also in that lecture, Milosz said:

BALISI'S EDIFICE

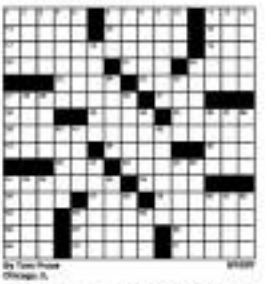
"HOMEBOY"

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNELA AVETRIA

DAILY CROSSWORD



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

7	1			2	9			
4	6			7	5	2	3	
					4		8	
						5	6	2
3	7			4			9	8
6	2	1						
	4		5					
	3	9	2	1			5	6
			4	8			1	7

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at conceptispuzzles.com

HOROSCOPE

Quality feeds: Essential for healthy livestock, prevention of disease outbreak

By Joel V. Nigos

Ensuring a healthy livestock is essential to every poultry or livestock producer.

Since a sizable investment is required for the production of healthy livestock, all care must be taken—from the food they eat, the water they drink, to their vitamins, feed additives, even the antibiotics administered to them.

Animal feed ingredients and raw materials should be tested and monitored regularly. It is of utmost importance that every producer knows the crude protein, fat, fiber, moisture, ash, vitamins and minerals of animal feeds since adulterated feed ingredients can cause sudden drops in the production of livestock, resulting in losses amounting to millions of pesos.

Water is also vital for livestock development. Water may be contaminated with e-coli or aflatoxin, the common microorganisms or bacteria present in the vital liquid. With contaminated water, even high quality feeds and medication become useless.

Water coming from deep wells are generally safe. Storing water safely, however, poses a more daunting challenge. Contaminants may be present in the container, or in the pipes where the water runs through. Thus, there is the need to monitor the water—from source to storage—regularly.

Livestock, especially poultry products such as chickens and their eggs, are so vulnerable—if not more—to contaminated water. Water contaminated can affect and/or decimate a poultry stock, or cost the producer a fortune in medicines and antibiotics.

Rhenes Gregorio San Pedro Jr., president of the National Federation of Egg Producers of the Philippines Inc. (NEFPI), and the United Broiler Raisers' Association (UBRA), stresses the importance of using high quality feeds to ensure a healthy livestock.

Gregorio San Pedro Jr., president of both the National Federation of Egg Producers of the Philippines Inc. (NEFPI) and the United Broiler Raisers' Association (UBRA), stresses the importance of using high quality feeds to ensure a healthy livestock

Elias Jose M. Inciong, UBRA external vice president, says that they are often consulted by government agencies as representatives of their sector with regard to problems and directions in the livestock industry

Pinky Tobiano, president and CEO of Qualibet Testing Services Inc., says that in raising livestock, utmost care should be taken by all stakeholders

"Ang sinasabi ko lagi sa mga kliyente ko, mas mura ang magpakain ng tama kaysa magpakain ng mura," he says.

Philippine Egg Board

The NEFPI, more commonly known as the Philippine Egg Board, was founded in 1998. Established to serve and protect the industry during financial crises, it is the first organization of egg producers. It has accredited chapters all over the country and accounts for 70 million active layers, which in turn produce more than 70 percent of all egg production nationwide.

UBRA, on the other hand, is composed of small- and medium-size poultry producers. Established in 2000, the organization was formed primarily to safeguard the industry, remove the cutthroat competition among member-producers, network among members, and share technology and information.

Elias Jose M. Inciong, external vice president of UBRA, adds that the organization had already made some headway since its founding. They have often been consulted by government agencies as representatives of their sector with regard to problems and directions in the livestock industry.

San Diego reiterates that it is important that livestock are fed with only good quality feeds and this is why he is glad they can purchase from any contaminants.

Modern-testing facility

Helping them do the job is a modern testing facility accredited by the Bureau of Animal Industry, an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture.

Qualibet Testing Services Inc., founded by Pinky Tobiano, offers proximate analyses for feeds, aflatoxin, vitamin and antibiotic analyses, stability studies at three environmental temperatures, microbiological and water analyses for farms.

Tobiano is a certified veterinarian who has made it her personal advocacy to ensure food safety for all and not just for a privileged few. She's a BS Chemistry graduate of the University of Santo Tomas. From 2006 to 2008, she took the "Owners Presidential Management Course" at Harvard Business School. This prepared her to establish Qualibet almost a year ago.

The BAI has the sole responsibility of ensuring the consuming public that the poultry and livestock that are available in the market are safe and wholesome.

"BAI has been very strict and use as international standards in testing feed ingredients (soybean meal, fish meal, wheat germ), feed additives, that are imported by local traders. The agency always maintains that there's no shortcut for safety because the feeds that the livestock eat are in turn ingested by humans," Tobiano states.

The BAI has accredited the services of Qualibet to expedite laboratory results used for import permits and veterinary drug registration. Its Feed Control Division periodically conducts tests on feeds. Aside from the BAI, Qualibet has also been tapped by the Department of Health and the Department of Trade and Industry for their various testing requirements.

Quality is better

Qualibet, which is short for "quality is better", is a food, water, pharmaceutical and veterinary testing facility. It is also the newest of its kind and boasts of the most modern testing facilities in the Philippines managed by trained chemists, pharmacists, and microbiologists who are well-trained in various fields such as internal audit, validation of testing procedures or methodologies, and cross training to continuously meet the changing needs of analysis. The company is also affiliated with the American Chemical Society and is also ISO/IEC 17025-certified.

In addition to animal feed testing, Qualibet also provides proficiency tests to feed mills and integrators. Several feed mills top Qualibet to constantly monitor the quality of their feeds for their protein, fat, fiber and moisture content. Qualibet also conducts services on Food Manufacturing Practices.

Tobiano says that since microorganisms are present in almost all stages of the food chain, even in the case the raising of poultry and livestock up to the final food preparation in the homes—it would really be important that safety and utmost care is taken by all stakeholders in the business. Indeed, even in this industry, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.

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Art renditions
for eco-fable on display

UNITED KINGDOM-BASED FILIPINA painter Jose Villasaro-Mellor presents her renditions for the ecological fable "The King and the Royal Tree" at G/F Gallery in Greenhills beginning Sept. 14. The suite of paintings and the story will be included in the upcoming Gaston publication of a trio of environmental tales visually rendered by three Mayaysay Award artists: Isabel Mayaysay-Mo, Flor Bolipata and Mellor.

In 2000, Mellor held a well-received solo exhibition at Hamilton Place in Park Lane, London. In 2002 and 2005, she held sold-out exhibits in two Philippine galleries of note.

For the children's book project, Mellor sees stories as her inspiration and motif to symbolize the presence and the joy of the sacred wood. The stories underpin the structures and provide the framework of the drawings.

Mellor is a graduate of the prestigious Chelsea College of Art and Design in England.

"The King and the Royal Tree" runs until Sept. 23. For details, call 1-14 Gallery at 9021152 or 0917-8908100, or visit the Canvas website at www.canvas.ph

The fable

"The King and the Royal Tree" is an ecological fable written by Paul Lee Abril, a University of Toronto professor emeritus and a lifelong conservationist. He has pioneered conservation during his over 20 years of work in eco-forestry and forest science in the Quebec forest industry, and does so professor of forest conservation policy in the University of Toronto.

A popular speaker, Abril is the author of "Green Laughter: Ecological Fables and Tales Tales" and numerous reports, articles, fables and poems about nature conservation.

Abril lives on the Niagara Escarpment in the village of Inglewood, Ontario.

"LOSS Realized"

"THE KING'S Dream"

PHOTOS in the collection of Armando Garcia

PHOTOS in the collection of Doris Bunoz

Rafael Cusi's colorful journey in black-and-white

BY FREEDOMFIRE AS IN BOLDBIRD

There are no gray areas between artist Rafael Cusi and publisher Marlene Aguilar. And difficult as it may be to understand, they can rest the orchestrators of their alliance with a severe honesty that is matched only by their unshakeable loyalty and respect for each other.

After months of hair and try to the art world by announcing their collaboration on the country's first comprehensive book on black-and-white portraits, the erstwhile duo ensured as much controversy when they decided—after over 250 book pieces considered—not to drop two startling subway and not speak to each other for two whole years.

What the world calls insane, Cusi and Aguilar call therapeutic.

"We needed that break," says Aguilar. "Popoy and I have such intense personalities that after spending time working closely together in a project that we are both very passionate about, we need to stay away from each other or we might explode. Boy, were leaving pings everywhere talaga."

Cusi agrees: "It's not easy for the people around us to figure out how we can break all communication for two whole years, then pick up exactly where we left off. Some even tried to create a wedge between us for their self-serving reasons. Unfortunately for them, they underestimated our friendship. Marlene and I trust each other completely. Turn one never a doubt that the book would be completed."

The moment, so emergent past, marked up led to the completion of the coffee-table book, "Yin and Yang." The book is replete with over 300 black-and-white paintings by the multi-awarded Cusi.

"I woke up one morning with a dream of publishing a book of paintings using ink on canvas. I was excited. I immediately called up Popoy to tell him about it and ask if he were interested. He's not mind if it was ok in the morning!" Aguilar said.

By 9 a.m., the painter was in line to design with—in real behold—over 200 paintings, all in black and white. "We used them we never in the studio, he just needed a little more time to find them. We shared the same vision now before we even met each other. How can you explain that?"

It turned out that Cusi had been painting in black and white for over three decades, without establishing a single piece. "I painted them for my personal pleasure," he said. "Black and white is extremely challenging. Just like with watercolor, every stroke is final. There is no room for error. You need great imagination to capture the essence of the subject and to create drama because there are no colors to engage the viewer with. It is an expertise in technique that cannot be mastered overnight."

"Yin and Yang" will be unveiled exactly 18 years since the launch of the painter's first project, "Philippine Good Beats in Watercolor," published in 1997. Endorsed by both the United Nations and the Smithsonian Institute, the book was also recognized of the Philippine Art for Birth-to-Grave Awards.

"Yin and Yang" is envisioned to be of breakthrough project that will help elevate the status of black and white portraiture to a level of popularity and acceptance similar to what the renowned found Cusi was able to accomplish when he effortlessly transitioned to painting with watercolor.

"If a time when watercolor was frowned upon as a minor medium, I dropped painting in oil and acrylic just to prove that the substance is as easy as good as the hand than outside the heath. This is the same message I wish to relate by painting in black-and-white. That there is unlimited power and splendor in my artwork if you have full control and mastery of your medium."

Proud of his Asian roots, Cusi said his black-and-white work in "Yin and Yang" is inspired by the medium art of calligraphy, where beauty—in all its strength and grace—is captured with every steady stroke from a master's hands. Having lived and worked in key cities of Europe and North America, Cusi learned all that he could from Western art, only to come home with an even greater desire to explore his Eastern roots and instill in our culture into his own artwork.

"Yin and Yang" will be launched Sept. 15 at Dulas Restaurant in Libis Bagtas, San Juan. Guests of honor include Hallmark Artist Napoleon Abueva, Imee Marcos, and Asian Entrepreneur Bank director Rafael Sandoz. Copies are now available in all major bookstores and art galleries nationwide. Call 4099172 or 0927-7520946.

PHOTOS in the collection of Dyderlin Alcantara-Dimalanta

PHOTOS in the collection of Cusi

Small but with a big shtick

By Paul S. De Vera

You may have heard them before, but Pinoy malapropisms have never been as cute or as enlightening as those in 'The More The Manyer!'

PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE FILIPINOS speak English so well and so easily that we are both amused and amazed by mangled clichés that are almost right yet deliciously wrong. "That's what I'm talking about it!" Or how about "Come, let's join us!" Or maybe the classic: "Why won't you cut no corner clocks?" This is exactly what is celebrated in "The More The Manyer!: Pinoy Clichés and Other Words of Wisdom" (Anvil Publishing Inc., 96 pages), which combines funny malapropisms with irresistibly humorous illustrations by Elbert Or. The book itself has a cute 11" x 5.25") and small price (P95) that belies the size of its charm: it's easy tucked in small, but it carries a big punch.

The first thing that elevates "The Manyer" over the many forwarded e-mails it is educational, almost scholarly approach to the clichés. After all, credit must be given to anyone who can write fulsome history of them have been included in jokes about certain celebrities, in outre cases, currently on. Of particular import is the index of corresponding correct English idioms at the end of the book. Finally, an antidote to the tongue-tripping that inspired the book in the first place. It doesn't shirk the responsibilities of correcting those hilarious errors, educating rather than laughing.

By dividing the book into six chapters ("How Do You Like My English?", "Multi-Hale Metaphors," "Clients of Wisdom," "Welcome Remarks," "Words Without Boundaries" and "Commercials"), the author behind "The Manyer" does the reader whatever favor someone came from and even, when they were supposed to be headed, before they got cloudied. There is a cathexis joy and enlightenment that comes with reading these verbal and grammatical miscues.

Palpable playfulness

There is also a palpable playfulness in other examples.

In that sense, "The Manyer" is the epitome of sequel to Rene Sta. Francesca Cruz's "Signing Pinoy: A Primer on Pinoy Everything," also from Tuttuano. That book listed famous pinoy sayings as well as establishments like restaurants and hairstylings with names such as Aba Banana and Mount Lion. "The More The Manyer" is the logical next installment.

The other element that distinguishes "The Manyer" is Or's art. Surprisingly an English teacher, Or had illustrated for magazines and books before, particularly some funny book covers and the witty "Bakuneco High" strip in E-Zone Magazine. But here, Or uses his distinctive style to provide the perfect pictorial accompaniment for the malapropisms, really his best work so far.

Take a look at that polar bear, of all things, sticking on top of a guy's head for "Keep that bear in mind." You have to believe it to see it, or something like that.

There is still much territory to cover when it comes to the Filipinos' comical misdeeds in English; every time someone says "taken cared of" or "scope up" with a straight face should be enough to make English teachers leap at them brandishing a whiteboard marker. This time, there's a book in a fun and funny step in the right direction.

Because it knows how even jokes can be helpful, "The More The Manyer! Pinoy Clichés and Other Words of Wisdom!" is a great reminder to all of how Filipinos can get carried away, even when it comes to not taking themselves too seriously.

Available in leading bookstores.

Balisi's edifice complex

From page D3

"The smile of the poor today is a simple function of a relatively recent discovery: that whoever wields the power is able to control language and not only with the prohibitions of censorship, but also by changing the meaning of words."

In this case, but out of the cult of identifying Hitler, it is the artist's treaty that probably harnesses that power visually. "Out of the Ideas and Into the World of White" is a haunting depiction of nocturnal ruins, a picture of war ruffles, captured at the right a night time outdoor area could be heard and the seamlessly moving patrol lights illuminate the dusted remains of once imposing buildings at several angles at once. Instead easily be Bonifacio at the height of Hitler's regime.

Along the way that "world's end" is a metaphor for the Holocaust. The instantly lit structures, to like those in other targeted, serve as pointers to the survivors and as a reminder of the horrific truths, a way that "So other end of the world will there be."

"Neighborhood" runs until Sept. 28. Blanc is on 2F Corner Dante 307 H.V. de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Call 752-4012 or 0920-8179430.

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LIFESTYLE

A treat of wonderful pianism

Piano concerts definitely make our day

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

PIANO MUSIC TOOK CENTER stage in a series of concerts held separately in different venues, giving piano enthusiasts a treat of pianism enjoyed by young and senior pianists alike.

At the Francisco Santiago Hall of Rizal Technological University in Mandaluyong, orchestral and pianist Paulo Sta. Ines forged a remarkable tandem as they showcased third and fourth and collaborative virtuosos. They had been keen competitors in local piano competitions and both had garnered top prizes.

Watching them perform as a team, rather than as competitors was simply engaging, thanks to the Manila Chamber Orchestra Foundation (MCO), which presented the concert as part of its 2007 festival. The MCO has always believed in nurturing the talents of young artists. Although the instrument played traditional pieces, the concert was largely celebrative.

Both UST professors Hermenegildo Santos recently wedding the lyrics to the poems, Monteclaros and Sta. Ines played Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos, K. 365, with the UST Symphony Orchestra. They electrified the audience with a wonderful celebration, lively and spontaneous.

They exchanged notes in Hillbrook's "brainstorm." This time Herrera on piano 1, and engaged the audience further into a light, mood throughout the set of three movements.

The high point of their performance was Saint-Saens "Carnival of Animals," as they with the UST Symphony Orchestra, initiated in a series of short pieces animals in the zoo. MCO director Amando Baltazar provided a stylish intervention in a well-orchestrated light functional introduction. The conductor's hands mostly moving the visuals of the Animal animals (babies) on screen on the right side of the stage.

Both young pianists rendered each a solo piece that underscored their respective soloist abilities: Monteclaro's Bouquet de Printemps for 11; while Santos, Rimsky's Oriental Aquarelles, all with prolific energy.

They certainly are the young pianists to watch! Their teachers are Raul Sunico and Cecile Bardin-Nolasco, respectively.

Asuncion at GSIS

At the GSIS Museum, Manila's piano virtuosos hosted Victor Santiago Asuncion, undoubtedly one of the country's finest pianists. He just finished his Doctorate in Musical Arts (DMA) in Piano Performance at University of Maryland and became scholarly specialist at University of Memphis, where he is the Coordinator of Piano and Collaborative Arts Studies.

Inspectors savored his virtuosity with his discriminating pianism that could only come from a keenest understanding of the works, and a well-honed technique that served as a foundation of his interpretative skill. He played intelligently, and in repeat area has extensive style of execution, fluidly but simply, he introduced each piece before playing it.

He was experience in Albeniz Borg's Sonata No. 1, a piece rarely heard on the local concert scene. He rendered three chromatic configurations with crystalline pieces and nuances. Its dense texture he etched in velvety tones.

He shifted gear to Ravel's "Gaspard de la nuit," emerging it palpably with strength. Virtuosity to keep in lyricism. "Ondine" was so evocatively singing, "Le gibet," shockingly sweet, and the finale, "Scarbo," insistently rhythmic.

His final complete abandon in Liszt's Sonata in B Minor, where he combined power and serene touch. His sustained prowess could not be limited as he fired brilliant octaves, handsome elements in the fugue, and dynamic chords, all matchlessly rounded by an affecting ongoing lyric.

Hinalla must have many more of pianist Asuncion, an alumnus of the Philippine High School for the Arts.

Hinalla Bautista and PHSA presented the concert for the benefit of the PHSA Alumni Chapter for its student travel.

Sta. Isabel musicians

Finally, the Santa Isabel College Symphonic Band Philharmonic, composed of five pianists faculty members, pulled up the other voice over weekend with a rousing symphonic piano music in a concert held at the school's inner court, titled "Piano Carousel."

The pianists were Cecile Bardin-Perez, Bernice Steven Tuason, Randy Jose Malicse, Nestor Tuason and John Patrick Reyes. The occasion was the 37th Anniversary Foundation anniversary of the school.

Imagine five upright pianos that not so coincidentally juxtaposed space on the corner of the school's basketball court. Each pianist under a clockwise musical plays on the same piano to the left until everyone comes in full circle.

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Hooray for piano teachers!

By Pablo A. Tariman
Lyner Rivera

The main problems of the profession remain the lack of good scores and music editions, and the dearth of performance opportunities for new talents

WITH SO THREE GUNS AS OUT-burst of young piano talents in the country as showcased in the latest edition of the National Music Competition for Young Artists and the piano festivals of different stripes to coincide, no?

Well, the buoyant piano-teachers are active and consequently getting updates on the latest in the piano-teaching profession.

A case in point is the array of projects lined up by the Piano Teachers Guild of the Philippines (PTGP), which is sponsoring the 2007 Bach Competition, with its winners to be announced Sept. 30 at Philamlife Theater, and Oct. 20 at "Tea on Bach Presents."

In preparation for this competition, seminars were conducted by PTGP president Manuel Maranda on April 29, July 1 and Aug. 5 on correct articulations, dynamics, elocution of ornaments and overall interpretation of Bach's music according to the practice of the period. Baroque period.

Auditions for the PTGP competition committee were the colloquium of the Bach competition are Invitations Stalwarts; Dr. Well-Tempered Clavier Books; and Major Works and Transcriptions. Eliminations still be held at the UST Conservatory of Music recital halls, and the winners will be known in the final round on Sept. 16.

Since the founding on Nov. 2, 1972, the PTGP has been actively pursuing the standardization of professional and pedagogical methods of piano teachers throughout the country.

Surprising maturity

Pianists Shah Imtiaz and Mary Anne Espina of the PTGP recently took time out to answer questions on the state of piano-playing and teaching in the country.

Imtiaz believes the standard of piano-playing has been generally positive, and Espina agrees.

"A lot of young kids play well beyond their years, and their sense of maturity is surprising," Imtiaz explained.

The main problems of the profession remain the lack of good scores and music editions, and the dearth of performance opportunities for new talents.

"What is why we at the PTGP have festivals and competitions to get young musicians to perform in good halls, and for them to have a venue for their talent," she added.

Are piano teachers in the provinces at par with piano teachers in Metro Manila and major cities?

Generally, news Ismail, most of the good teachers are in Manila. That is why PTGP is reaching out to the provinces by giving seminars on the latest performance practices and trends in piano-playing.

What is in store for the piano profession in this country?

Ismail likes to think the future of the piano profession is bright.

"The PTGP is working hard to make sure our teachers and students will hopefully be at par with the rest of the world," he says.

For inquiries on the PTGP Bach Competition, call 7480001 or 2411081.

Here and there

Fresh faces for triumphant team-up with conductor Helen Quach and the Manila Symphony present Christine Cayton in with their solo recital on Sunday, Oct. 14, at the CCP Little Theater with guest violist Alan Isaacs.

Her program includes Haydn's Divertimento in G Major, HWV 435; Grieg's Lyric Pieces; and Rachmaninoff's Six Moments Musicaux, Op. 16, and Sounds in G Minor, Op. 39, for violin and cello. For tickets, call 8151820.

In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Philippine High School for the Arts (PHSA) and the 15th anniversary of Josephine Pangilinan Meo's success, the PHSA will present a romance-benefit dance concert at Tanghalang Mavuong Makiling (MAC Theater) on Sept. 14, and at Francisco Santiago Hall on Sept. 16. For inquiries, call 8926862/2897.

WINNERS of the PTGP competitions

PIANIST Christine Cayton

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Peta presents 'Romulus D' Grayt'

THE PHILIPPINE EDUCATIONAL Theater Association, in association with the Embassy of Switzerland in Manila and Mime Chatelaine Ker-Dawson-Court, brings to the stage Friedrich Dürrenmatt's "Romulus The Great."

Adapted by Jerry Respeto as "Romulus D'Grayt" from the English translation of Gerhard Nellhaus, and directed by Peta artistic director Maribel Legarda, the play tells the story of Romulus, the last emperor of Rome, who, instead of ruling as already crumbling empire, is more raising chickens in his farm.

"Romulus D'Grayt" features an all-male cast that includes Dido Arda Paz, Melvin Lee, Ian Segarra, Sir Agustus, Ronnie Bernales, Buddy Cayanan, Andrew Cruz, Vincent de Jesus, Jef Dee, Kiko Avila Cruz, Axel Sinclair, Mac Dimaunga, Jess Evardone, Gerjoy Javier, Nicky Lobaja, Phil Noble, Mikael Recketa, Paolo Rodriguez, Arthur Tenorio, Miguel Vasquez and Randy Villacorta.

Lights design is by Nanna Ballesteros, production design by Lee Abaya and music by Dodjie Fernandez.

The play runs continuously at Onia Theatre Cinder's Tanghalang Pete-Dianne Pichlo-Sunday beginning Sept. 14 until Oct. 26. There will be two performances a day. Schedules, however, are subject to change without prior notice.

Call the Peta Marketing and Public Relations Office at 4100821/7126244, or e-mail mpr@petatheater.com or petatheater@yahoo.com. Visit www.petatheater.com.

LEAD actor Dido dela Paz

CAST of "Romulus D'Grayt"

Teatro Tomasino opens 30th season

TEATRO TOMASINO, the university-wide theater guild of the University of Santo Tomas, announces the staging of its first major production for its 30th season, "Unang Dulot," a 1999 Palanca Award-winning one-act play by Eduardo Pesos. It will be staged Sept. 17-18 at the Albertus Magnus Auditorium, 4/F, UST Education Bldg., with shows at 11 a.m., and at 1, 3, and 5 p.m.

"Unang Dulot" portrays the unsung adventures of three young girls taking their first steps into womanhood during the Philippine Revolution. The play will be directed by the guild's artistic director, Nida Bella D'Garza.

Part of the proceeds will be allotted for the Kindness High School in Barotac, Mancilla. For ticket reservations and other inquiries, contact Tina at 0915-7122000 or the Teatro Tomasino office at 4063451 local 8404.

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WESTERN UNION

'Love's Labour's Lost' from Repertory Philippines

CARLA Bautista, Hiro Echevaria, Jenny Jusayan, Epy Quizon, Cris Villanueva, Mio Manahan, Gabe Santos and Cheryl Cosim

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents William Shakespeare's "Love's Labour's Lost" in a reimagined play set in the mid-'30s in Manila's University Belt right before the Edsa revolution.

Those were the days of Psychedelic Furs, Spandau Ballet, early Madonna and Duran Duran, women with big hair, maroon eyes and shoulder pads, and men with curve haircuts and baggy pants.

Shakespeare entertains audiences through exuberant physical humor and witty wordplay in this play about young and his cohorts who vow to spend three years devoted only to study with no distraction at all from anyone or anything, only to find themselves tempted by ladies and love when the princess and her entourage arrive on a state.

Director Bart Guingona's cast includes Epy Quizon, Iza Villanueva, Hiro Echevaria, Gabe Santos, Mitch Muñoz, Jenny Jusayan, Eric Villanueva, Cricket Constantino and Cyan Bautista. (My supposedly!) Ana Roces, Oliver Quizon, Arje Figueroa, Kenneth King, Pete Briones, Jingcheng Nonidez and Reggie Richardson.

"Love's Labour's Lost" runs Sept. 11-Oct. 7, on Onstage, Greenhills. (632) 7-Makati, Cell (0917)5 (Co.) or (0) 1109.

By Constantino C. Tejero

INCREDIBLY, THERE were no winners this year honored by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) in recognition of "greatness of spirit shown in service to the peoples of Asia."

Even our woman President could not attend the presentation ceremonies of this highest of honors, known as Asia's Nobel Prize, on Aug. 31 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Main Theater. President Macapagal-Arroyo was in Malaysia on a visit, but an RMAF staff member said she had been invited every year but not once had the period the ceremonies since 2000.

Only three high government officials were sighted in the premises: Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Mrs. Ermita and Chief Justice Reynato Puno.

Added by RMAF board chair Pitchaya Poolvoralaks, Puno presented the medals and certificates to the awardees. Above them hovered the giant gold medallion embraced with the late President Magsaysay's image, set amid a copper-colored relief representation of laurels embellished with conch shells, against the cut-blood velvet curtain.

There was one absence, though, that was applauded: that of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the third human rights activist from China now incarcerated in Lieu prison in Shandong province. He was honored with the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Emergent Leadership.

Religious upbringing

There were three Chinese honorees this year, the most by one country. Hong Xu, 36, editor-in-chief of Beijing-based Fang Fang who edited her dying mother's "Wuhan Diary" that I too tell me, so you would have money to buy medicine?" Both parents died, anyway, leaving Sing Fang and her younger sister orphaned by AIDS.

Fang Kwong, for peace and International Understanding, also went a traditional Chinese short to relate silk brocade. Wife of immigrant textile tan, he gave special thanks to his late mother-in-law with and collaborator Marcia, and dedicated his award to Mother Nature, causing at least.

Jovito R. Salonga from the Philippines, for Government Service, attributed his long career in public service to his religious upbringing, his father being a Presbyterian pastor. "What separates me from other political leaders," he said, "is the fact that I do not separate my religious from my political beliefs and from public service."

Though now almost in age, the venerable statesman still appeared hale in seven-gray hair-cut Tagalog.

Lifelong vision

Kim Soo-hwan from Korea, for Public Service, was guided in secret stage where he stood, as black coat and old, near the a model of dignity and integration.

Blinded since 16 during the Korean War, he cited his speech on Braille, thanking doctors, nurses, teachers and hospital workers for acting as his hands and feet, and his wife Jung-Ae for love.

His $50,000 prize money he committed to the building of his second eye hospital. "I will always strive to ease the suffering of my brothers and sisters in pain," he said.

Michaelis Pius Fonte Hospital, for Community Leadership, was the most eminent of the list, almost embarrassed, like a little boy lost. According to low taxes, he said the award was "the greatest surprise of my life... has honored my spirit very much and I feel much younger now."

He refuted his wishes as a child wanting to have enough food, clothes, shoes, books, and pencils, and as a college student wanting to become an engineer to get a better job and have a good life. "However, many of my wishes were not fulfilled," he said.

Then he enumerated new seminar vocational training schools, income-generating programs, college for the poor, community volunteerism for the remote villages—his lifelong vision of improving the lot of rural Hopes, and eventually the world.

Rhapsody and lament

Palagummi Sainath from India, for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts, translated his audiences that this was the 60th anniversary of Indian independence.

After dispatching over his country's history, he lamented over "a nation that ranks fourth on the world's list of billionaires and 128th in human development," and lambasted "a media politically free but choked by profits."

At his most inspiring, he quoted a line from the Bhakti: "Live simply that others might simply live."

Appearing on Hindi poets and whats, shows-dad with chrysanthemum-yet what looked like a cross between a paparazzi suit and a fedora jacket, he looked every inch a hard-hitting journalist.

Then, known as China's Bamboo Lawyer, could not receive his award in person. Chen is under house arrest after serving a prison sentence of four years and three months for exposing local officials' abuses of China's one-child policy, including forced abortions.

Brothers could his wife Yuan Weijing intend to get her award, as she, too, had been stopped from leaving Beijing. Her passage was cited by RMAF president Carmencita Abella to an instantly solemn audience.

During the presentation of the seven awardees, when each was called to receive stage to form a row, Chen's name was the most applauded. And his absence seemed to be the most conspicuous.

In his congratulatory remarks, Puno was hesitating even verbal invitation.

He eulogized President Magsaysay as "our incandescent moral light." (That was, after quoting Martin Luther King Jr.: "Everyone must decide whether to walk in the light of creative altruism or to walk in the darkness of destructive selfishness.")

At one time, he huffed some in the audience when he cursed getting Teng Kwong by "preserving his country's dancing birds... quilling knives, and flowing shoes, near shoes-ened"—and that was when his honoree realized he was referring to an extra-minor robot.

Finally he thanked the honorees for "showing us how to live," and that "there can be a heaven on earth."

VENERABLE Hiro Echevaria, Jenny Jusayan, Kim Soo-hwan, Marcelo Pisa, Teng Kwong, Palagummi Sainath and Cheung Ta-Ching/Inset: Incoming Chief Justice Puno is unable to attend the awarding ceremonies for obvious reasons

FORMER Sen. Salonga is the hero of President Ramon Magsaysay

A treat of wonderful pianism

From page E1

Together with the Ateneo Ballet College Chamber Orchestra composed of the school's music students and conducted by Cristian L. Alcazar, the Bellwood Philharmonic rendered Bee's Concerto in A Minor as an opener.

The rest of the program consisted of familiar light pieces worked for Dee pianist, marking it rather lovely except Liszt's rhythmic intricacies, thanks to his genius of Jose Tan, who arranged the classical standard pieces, and John Reyes, who arranged two Filipino numbers, "Pastorale" and "Paraluman" and "Paraluman" Indeed, the result Dee was superb: tasteful voicings mostly balanced, sounding like appropriate orchestral interlocutor it to-theirs!

From an overture, "The Beautiful Galatea," Suppe; a march, "Semper Fidelis," Sousa; a movie theme, "The Entertainer (The Hang)," Joplin and the like, the pieces rendered were superb a lot.

Clapping even bulging used Bob playing to the joy of the audience who gave delight as they celebrated the familiar tunes they loved.

The pianist forged a strong rapport, they played with burning passion. Artur Caparis encored the performance and crowded brief introductions.

Impeccably tuned, the pianist sounded excellent. Are piano technicians open to "Iggy" Ramos has kept his magic touch not only in tuning but also in maintaining the pianos, the grand Dee piano at the Francisco Santiago Hall seemed silent above, which gave even and balanced tones.

VICTOR Asencio

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WESTERN UNION

ARTWORKS of kinder gems exhibited

CAMBRIDGE helps kids find out how things work, develop skills in problem-solving and acquire interactive and social capabilities

Project: New way of learning

A new educational approach builds the confidence to know and learn among children

Text by Ramona C. Burgos
Photos by Rony Hendiales

HELPING KIDS AGED 18 MONTHS TO 6 years become thinkers and not just pressure learners has been the goal of Cambridge Child Development Centre.

Through its Project Approach curriculum, Cambridge, which has branches in Quezon City, Manila, San Juan and Cebu, teaches children to be authentic, scientific and creative.

An early childhood education program, Project Approach has been adopted by school districts and state programs in the United States and Canada.

"Studies have shown that through Project Approach, learning can be more dynamic, flexible and meaningful for children," says Mona Ilao, director of Cambridge, in Capitol Irrisa, Capitol Hills, Quezon City. "The program builds on children's curiosity and interest, exposing more in-depth learning. It offers them opportunities to relate new information to what they already know from their own experiences. They learn to engage in problem-solving and develop confidence in their capabilities."

Ilao adds that Project Approach addresses recent findings in brain research, emotional intelligence, multiple intelligences, the role of art and creativity in education and the importance of the classroom as a social context for early learning.

Project Approach and the insight it provides into a child's understanding are valued by teachers. The children go on field trips, then draw sketches of what they had noticed and what had been important to them during their trip.

"In the past, the teachers have had difficulty motivating the children in their class to draw on their own. Some students typically are delayed at least one year and often have multiple impairments. Some had never seen any recognizable shapes in the children's drawings. During the drawing in the context of a project helps the teacher to visualize what the child is attempting to draw," Ilao explains. "These drawings that children produce demonstrate their growth and understanding."

Planning

Ilao believes that the most helpful thing about Project Approach is the consultations it makes to planning. "I think it's easier mainly because you have a goal—to see, first of all, what knowledge the children have, where their interests are, and from once you know where they want to go, it's easier to plan along those lines. Planning is based on the children's interests. One way the teachers pick up on the children's interests is by listening to what the children say."

As an administrator, Ilao is very pleased with the effect of Project Approach on her school. When asked how Project Approach has affected teachers, she says, "I think it's made them think of what level the children are on and where they are taking the kids. Instead of only themes, they really have to look at where the kids are and what they're doing, what they are interested in. And then they have to figure out how to reach it. They can't find their ready-made in a book. In this process, they've had the kids do things that you don't often think about young children doing."

Ilao believes that teachers who use the Project Approach do more work than they would if they were using a traditional curriculum. "In the typical curriculum, the curriculum, more reliance is placed on books. With this project work, they've got to plan field trips, they've got to be talking to people. They've got to figure out what's hands-on that the children can explore. They have to bring in the stuff that the kids can re-use—make things available to the kids to spend papers."

Programs

For toddlers who are 18-30 months, Cambridge Capitol Hills offers a program from 9 to 11 a.m. held three times a week (which costs P6,000/year) or five times a week (P9,000/year). The program includes creative art, science discovery, pre-mathematics, fun cookery and tons of play time.

The nursery class for 2½- to 4-year-old kids (P72,000/year) features music and movement, creative language program, phonics, computer-assisted learning, science discovery, creative art and yoga.

The kindergarten program for 4-6 years old (P99,000/year) offers language and spelling, computer-assisted learning, phonics, science discovery, creative art and speech and drama.

The miscellaneous fee of P6,000 covers snacks, materials, field trips and a set of uniform.

Project Approach, Ilao says, has made Cambridge's program "more substantial" and has provided a "more well-rounded hands-on curriculum."

"We're not doing all of the teaching. The children are teaching each other. It seems that we are letting them take more responsibility. They come up with some of the most intelligent things! It's just unbelievable to see what kids this age can do and think," Ilao says.

Call Cambridge Capitol Hills at 981-4452 and 981-4453, e-mail capitol-hills@cambridge.com.ph. Log on website at www.cambridge.com.ph/capitolhills.

Dr. Sylvia Ebard, a leading expert on Project Approach, will conduct a seminar workshop on Sept. 22, 29, and 29, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the downtown Hall of Holidays (no relation). Manila is demonstrating planning projects, doing field work, investigating people and places, representing new learning, documentation and assessing student learning.

UNILAB is TRUSTED QUALITY HEALTHCARE

Medical professionals and consumers from across socio-economic classes agree that in the Philippine pharmaceutical and healthcare industry, one corporate brand stands out as the trusted quality healthcare: Unilab.

This insight was the result of the qualitative study for the Unilab corporate tagline conducted last year by internationally respected research agency Makiki among consumer groups and doctors. Two consumer groups composed of 35 to 45 year-old male and female from across socio-economic classes who are purchase decision-makers for their families' healthcare needs were involved in the study while the three doctor groups were composed of general practitioners and specialists with over 10 years of practice. Both stakeholder groups agreed that among the shortlist of corporate taglines tested, "Trusted Quality Healthcare" is most befitting for Unilab.

"Trusted kasi ang Unilab, may sangkatutak na best-selling na na brands," said a consumer in the verbatim accounts recorded by Makiki's Another added, "Effective ang gamot kaya trusted." Still another, "Matatag na. Proven quality." Another consumer succinctly expressed why he thinks Unilab is and should be trusted, "Kasi pinagkakagalaw niya ang kabuhayan mo."

A doctor also underscored Unilab's heritage in the industry that has made it a trusted brand. "Matagal na ang kinilala, kaya na niyang panindigan." Addressing a broad base of common and chronic illnesses with Unilab's ever still brands was also highlighted as a strong point, as expressed by another doctor. "Complete package siya. Wide range ang products niya." Another doctor highlighted Unilab's accessibility to read number of patients without sacrificing safety and efficacy. "Unilab is pro-patient," he said. "They do bioequivalence so you are guaranteed of the quality."

Internal brainstorming

Prior to external stakeholder testing, the search for the Unilab corporate tagline commenced with a series of internal brainstorming workshops participated in by Unilab employees groups consisting of staff from managers, division heads, and general managers of marketing divisions.

This internal initiative is imperative to the research process because it ensures that Unilab's corporate tagline is accepted and embraced by Unilab employees themselves, who are essentially Unilab's ambassadors to external stakeholders such as medical professionals, trade partners, consumers, among others.

The internal workshops yielded an interesting and insightful result: the key words Unilab employees want in the corporate tagline are trust, quality health, and care-true all woven into Unilab's new corporate tagline "Trusted Quality Healthcare."

Statement of responsibility

The corporate tagline is a fundamental component of Unilab's corporate branding initiatives. In essence, "Trusted Quality Healthcare" highlights Unilab's character, reason for being, and heritage as the country's largest and leading pharmaceutical and healthcare company. Not only is it about who Unilab is, but more significantly about what Unilab means to the lives of millions of Filipinos served with safe, effective, and affordable healthcare.

More than a claim, therefore, "Trusted Quality Healthcare" is an affirmation of all that the members of the Unilab Family both past and present collectively worked hard for in all of its 62-year history. The fruit of unwavering commitment to people's health and wellness.

More than a promise, "Trusted Quality Healthcare" is a constant reminder of the responsibility built into Unilab's mission of helping consumers live the healthy life they deserve. It is, indeed, a statement of responsibility.

HYRA Liza (far right) with teachers Matt Joseph Pangan (at right), Kay-ann Erica Dimasuanan, Tedjhen Mary Pia Cadenas Yason, Nursery 1 classmate Caizo, Nursery 2, and Jennifer Aida Agad, Realm

Broadway hit "Art" at the Music Museum

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL premiere in Cebu, Trumpets Xena's Broadway and London hit comedy "Art" is set to be staged for a special Manila performance for one night only on Sept. 22, 8 p.m., at the Music Museum, under Bart Gamponia's direction.

Produced by Little Boy Productions and Artes's Artists Inc., the new production features Art Director Michael de Mesa and Ricky Davao.

"Art" is a brilliant comedy about a friendship that is threatened when one member of the bunch, does something that upsets another member—in this case, buying a painting that he finds "pretentious."

Originally written in French and produced by Sonia Courtney in London, "Art" has won numerous awards, including The 1998 Tony Award for Best Play and the 1997 Olivier Award for Best Comedy. The play was translated by Lutz Mauke expressly for the Manila production of the original.

Tickets are available at Ticketworld, 891-9999 or www.ticketworld.com.ph. For sponsorships and group sales, call Beatriz, 917.7.955784.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

Disney supports its star despite nude photo

NEW YORK—THE WALT DISney Co. is supporting the 18-year-old star of its wildly successful "High School Musical" franchise, despite how "hapless [or judgmental]" its posting for intimate photos that were leaked to the Internet.

Vanessa Hudgens apologized Friday for the photos, which show her smiling and standing naked next to a bedroom dresser in front of the camera.

"I want to apologize to my fans, whose support and trust means the world to me," Hudgens said in a statement issued about a day after the photos surfaced. "I am embarrassed over this situation and regret having ever taken these photos. I am thankful for the support of my family and friends."

Hudgens has starred in "High School Musical" and "High School Musical 2" as Gabriella, the sweet, innocent science geek whose romance with athlete Troy (played by Zac Efron, a classmate in the two hugely popular made-for-television movies on the squeaky-clean Disney Channel.

VANESSA HUDGENS

The sequel's premiere on Disney Channel last month attracted more than 17 million viewers, making it the summer's most-watched TV program.

Lapse in judgment

"Vanessa has apologized for what was obviously a lapse in judgment," said Disney Channel spokeswoman Patti McTeague. "We hope she's learned a valuable lesson."

She said negotiations were on-going to land all the actors for a "High School Musical 3" feature film—including Hudgens.

Hudgens' publicist, Jill Frieze, would not say anything about who took the pictures and how they slipped out into the Internet.

Earlier on Friday, a representative for Hudgens confirmed the image was of Hudgens but said it "was taken privately."

"It is a personal matter and it is unfortunate that this has become public," the representative said in a statement.

In a Teen magazine interview released earlier this week, Hudgens described herself as "a very private person" with "very good morals" who enjoyed serving as a role model.

Hudgens is a superstar among the preteen set, and Disney has spun a wide merchandising net around the series with albums and concert tours, like and films to correctly date to real life, making them big attractions for celebrity magazines.

The films' wholesome nature—for a company that has made its name on family-friendly fare for generations—is a big part of its concern.

Any scene parents of young fans were outraged by the photo, saying it tarnished Hudgens' image.

Record audience

If Disney executives had cut ties with Hudgens, not naming the company's name associated with anything out G-rated, they would have run the risk of upsetting a lot of kids that has made the company millions upon millions of dollars.

"High School Musical 2" debuted on Disney Channel last month to a record audience of 17.2 million viewers to become the most-watched individual program in cable TV history.

The last thing for Disney seems to do nothing, said Michael Levine, a Hollywood image consultant and author of "24 books. AP/Reuters

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CHEER FACTOR

Paris Hilton sues Hallmark over catchphrase

LOS ANGELES—Paris Hilton has sued Hallmark Cards Inc. in the US District Court, seeking an injunction and unspecified damages for the use of her private and catchphrase "That's hot" on a greeting card. Commerce Hallmark spokeswoman Julie O'Dell in an e-mailed statement: "These cards take a satirical look at news and gossip surrounding pop-culture figures, including Paris Hilton, and we do not believe Hallmark has violated any of Ms. Hilton's rights." AP

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GALLERIA

1 THE INVASION • THX
2 DISTURBIA
3 UNBELIEVABLE TRIBU
4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
5 NANCY DREW
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 SKINWALKERS
8 A LOVE STORY
9 NANCY DREW
10 1408

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5 A LOVE STORY
6 DAY WATCH
7 SKINWALKERS

METRO EAST

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 A LOVE STORY
3 SKINWALKERS
4 1408
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 THE INVASION
7 DISTURBIA
8 NANCY DREW

NOVALICHES

1 DISTURBIA
2 A LOVE STORY
3 NANCY DREW
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY
5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY

PIONEER

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2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY Sneak Preview
3 SKINWALKERS
4 DAY WATCH

STA. ROSA

1 1408
2 CASA
3 THREE
4 THE INVASION

LIPA

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 ROSE

DASMARINAS

1 SINKING of JAPAN
2 THE INVASION
3 THREE
4 1408

IMUS

1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 THREE
4 A LOVE STORY
5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY Sneak Preview

ANGELES

1 SINKING of JAPAN
2 ROSE
3 CASA
4 THREE

TARLAC

1 A LOVE STORY
2 LICENSE to WED
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY

STARMILLS

1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 ROSE
5 SINKING of JAPAN
6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

1 BLIND DATING
2 DON'T LOOK BACK
3 BORDERTOWN
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5 CASA
6 THREE

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7 DAY WATCH
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2 NANCY DREW
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 SKINWALKERS
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
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7 1408
8 A LOVE STORY
9 EVAN ALMIGHTY
10 RUSH HOUR 3
11 DISTURBIA

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 781-3400
1 1408
2 DISTURBIA
3 SKINWALKERS
4 NANCY DREW
5 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY BACOOR 435-7400
1 DISTURBIA
2 A LOVE STORY
3 DAY WATCH
4 1408
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8 1408
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10 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
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1 1408
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3 A LOVE STORY
4 ROSE

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2 PLANET TERROR
3 A LOVE STORY
4 CANTON NETWORK
5 ROSE
6 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 781-3400
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12 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY SUCAT 822-4041
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2 1408
3 DISTURBIA
4 NANCY DREW
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6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
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13 SINKING OF JAPAN

SM CITY SUCAT 822-4041
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3 A LOVE STORY
4 SINKING OF JAPAN

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Movie treats and tricks

AT THE TOMEE FILMS NEVER ceases to amaze, it's "Hanggang" (And here she goes). The prolific film shows them bring the stars and pop culture of the '60s back to life. It also creates goals for television as it reveals the shaky start of the Civil Rights movement.

The film stars a TV dancer pregnant to Baltimore in the sibling period for its anti-racist drama. The dance contest makes it easy for the movie to come up with energetic production numbers that make it a visually and musically exciting production.

On the debit side, the movie runs too hard to truth the standard issue of the '60s, so many of its songs end up sounding too similar to each other. Director '60s musicals like "Hairspray" featured a wider range of musical impulses, to more dramatic effect.

"Hairspray" boasts of vivid performances by **Nikki Blonsky**, **Michelle Pfeiffer**, **James Marsden** and **Christopher Walken**, with only **John Travolta** dubbing it with his heavy-handed mimicking portrayal of Pfeiffer's mother-to-wife. The film's best and most underrated element is its anthem for equality passionately sung by **Queen Latifah**.

Novel premise

On the other hand, "Evan Almighty" has a novel premise, but doesn't take full advantage of its comic and thematic possibilities.

Steve Carell plays a news anchor appointed by whose 20-term of higher political office are shattered when God, in the person of **Samuel L. Jackson**, orders him to stop worshiping and build an ark, because a second deluge is coming.

Naturally, Carell's character treats the divine order with scorn, until God unleashes his powers of persuasion on his unwilling house. As the story of Noah finally does God's bidding, and links this to find in the process—until God's this prediction does come to pass.

The film performs with its colorful menagerie of all sorts of animals, from mice to elephants, who lend

VIEWFINDER

Amador C. Torre

JOHN TRAVOLTA AND MICHELLE PFEIFFER in "Hairspray"

God's call to gratitude to relate the problems turned out which is building his ark. But the massive comedy spectacle is less entertaining, because it sticks to the rules and the obvious.

This is a glitch in Carell's high-flying TVillies career, and a timely reminder that even popular stars must rest on their laurels and hit like, and must work hard on every assignment, as though it were their last.

Sensitive Ishmael

For a major change of pace, Mardo Ishmael does it in the sci-fi thriller "Pet Sematary." The film's story hinges on the return of a space shuttle that returns the world's population with a deadly "virus" from outer space that sets up its victims' bodies, or turns them into zombies.

Ishmael herself gets infected, but avoids complete enslavement by refusing to kill anyone. It appears that the most infectious desire is never when people need awake.

To its credit, "The Invasion" is full of horrifying and exciting twists and turns, and Kidman's portrayal provides the production with the first and sensitive fulcrum it needs. Despite these plus points, however, the film fails to come into its own as a unified whole because its premise isn't set into motion all that logically, and most questions are raised than are answered.

'Oprah'

On the Hallmark Channel, "The Oprah Winfrey Show" highlights some extraordinary women's inspirations. Sept. 16, **Sunshine Hunting** guests.

Sept. 22 at 7 p.m., **Sarah Jessica Parker** and **Victoria Hagan** talk about fashion and home design. At 8 p.m., **Oprah** interviews "opening" winners **Diahann Carroll**, **Sonia Evans** and **Nina Iglesias**. Sept. 30, the focus is on "Hairspray" stars Michelle Pfeiffer, Nikki Blonsky and Queen Latifah.

Homecoming

The 2008 homecoming of alumni of St. Joseph's School-Pandacan, Manila, will be held today in the SJS grounds. Entertainment will be provided by **Erik Santos**, **Marvel Bridgeport** and **Boy Abunda**. Call Corazon Duenas-Cabral at 559-0000 or Rosa Guinaman at 440-1120 or 09.

Feedback

From: Pompoy Peñaville, Hewsay Ulric "I like reading your columns because you don't write about sex, but on the relevant and family-oriented issues of those like ethics, and principles. I also know you're not chemical about promoting yourself. Through you, I would like to call the attention of ZBAT on some consumerism lapses on two of its shows:

"Every day drama commercials a few days before it airs, there are banners, stickers, manyaril in person conversation. However, when the minutes are aired on TV on a regular basis, the blunders should not be ignored. Another instance: The usual perpetrator was recently accused on the twisted episode (pero PG rating) in mood of the third (pero TV-14), which is the correct one, Jolanda?"

Manay Ichu is Gawad Urian's lifetime achievement awardee

FILM INSIDERS' SUBLIME SIDEKICK Manolo will receive the Natatanging Gawad Urian Achievement from the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino during the 2007 Gawad Urian on Sept. 13 at the Music Lee Irwin Theater of the Ateneo de Manila University.

The Manunuri, the society of film critics, is giving the award to Manolo for his long years of leadership in the movie industry, including to the institution of policies, programs and even agencies catering to the needs and interests of movie professionals.

Manolo, "Manay Ichu" to movie workers, was behind the establishment of the Film Academy of the Philippines in the 1980s. He worked tirelessly for the formation of guilds covering the different aspects of the movie profession. These guilds now form the FAP.

Manolo was also instrumental in the passage of Republic Act 9167, the law that created the Film Development Council of the Philippines, which formulates programs and grants incentives to empower the quality of Filipino movies.

The council has formed the Cinema Evaluation Board, which evaluates and grades films submitted to it and depending on the ratings, grants them incentives.

Belonging to the Sta. Ana family behind Inquirer, Manolo was also a producer. He produced Mike de Leon's "Batch '81," one of the greatest Filipino films of all time.

The 30th Gawad Urian ceremonies will be produced by ABT Productions and will be broadcast on August 19.

Meanwhile, the Manunuri has announced the nominees for best short film. "Tahimik" (E.J. Salcedo), "Kandao" (Mes-De Guzman), "Silid" (Gino Calabroso), "Wang Walanyo ang Uhaw" (Lee Diaz), "Sabwat" (Emmanuel de la Cruz), "Dobe Tena" (Debbie Meyer and Nik Lalata), "Pabo" (Jhoe Cagaoan), "Chakaruda" (Gabriela Tolentino), "Mahuyo ng Hapi" (Mark de la Cruz), and "Mga Sugat na Hay Pakpak" (Gloria Enay at Rhoda Lachapa).

Nominated for best picture are "Hating Kabisa ng Bala" (CPI Cinemovie Digimatic), "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo" (One Cinema), "Tuhog" (Cinevideo Productions), "Balikbayan" (MLR Films), "Manoro" (Centerstage Productions), "Sakal, Sakla, Saya" (Lotus Tower), "Romeo and Juliet" (CPI Cinemovie Originals).

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 CHOPSUEY	2 DISTURBIA	3 NANCY DREW	4 A LOVE STORY					
GLORIETTA 4	1 DAYWATCH	2 SHANGHAI KISS	3 DISTURBIA						
	4 ARE WE ALONE YET?	5 THE INVASION	6 NANCY DREW	7 1408					
GREENBELT 1	1 DAYWATCH	2 NANCY DREW							
GREENBELT 3	1 NANCY DREW	2 DISTURBIA							
	3 SHANGHAI KISS	4 EVAN ALMIGHTY	5 DAYWATCH						
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 DISTURBIA	2 NANCY DREW							
	3 DAYWATCH	4 THE INVASION	5 SHANGHAI KISS						
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 PLANET TERROR	3 1408	4 THE INVASION					
MARKET! MARKET!	1 CHOPSUEY	2 SHANGHAI KISS							
	3 NANCY DREW	4 DISTURBIA	5 DAYWATCH						
TRINOMA	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 SHANGHAI KISS	3 DAYWATCH	4 NANCY DREW					
	5 CHOPSUEY	6 1408	7 DISTURBIA						

AT THE MALLS

Glorietta	MIEMA - Shooting Fun September 10 & 11, 2007 at the Glorietta Activity Center
Greenbelt	Jazz Nights September 12, 2007 at Gal 3 at Prisma
Alabang Town Center	Anime's Exhibit September 1 to 16, 2007 at the Activity Center
Ayala Center Cebu	Short Tastes of American and Local September 28, 6 PM, Chillago (Cinema 1)
Market! Market!	Leisure Mall Show September 6 & 9, 2007 at the Activity Center
Christian's	Repository (Philippines) presents Disney's CINDERELLA in Asia at SM's Aloha Theater - Alpines August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 687-0710
Ayala Museum	Antiquities: Portrait in the Kamhoreas August 28 to September 16, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 20 Loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
Tsi Nama	Samsung Kasteli An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones September 10 to 16, 10am to 9 pm, Starbucks / Food Choices Level 2

From homeless kid to king of the charts

SEAN KINGSTON

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—BABYSHAKES, MySpace buzz, Jamaican-bred Sean Kingston, 17, who appears to be a happy-go-lucky type, is actually an old soul with a young heart.

"I like that description," he said during a recent interview at the Sony/BMG office in Santa Monica.

Wearing a Billionaire Club cap, bandanna, loose shirt, denims and woven signs of his newfound wealth and popularity—a huge D-Shock sports watch, a silver necklace and matching silver bracelet in sculpture his superstar look—Sean is the world's latest music sensation.

He has the numbers to prove it: His debut single, "Beautiful Girls," is No. 1 in iMyspace, iTunes, AOL Music, Yahoo Music; the No. 1 Soyseau ring tone and No. 1 on Bill Board's Hot 100 where it remained for five consecutive weeks.

Recently, Sean toppled Jamie West -Oil the top of the UK chart, pushing the American rapper's "Swagger" single down to number two.

Breaking all formulas

The charming teener, who started writing and composing music when he was only 10, is also breaking all formulas. He has created a new genre where rap, reggae, pop and dance are all combined. He does not use profanity in his songs; he broke into show business by spamming himself in Myspace and was soon getting a million hits a day for his song; and he loves to "sound-old but look young."

He tried to get the attention of record producer J.R. Rotem of the Bebga Heights label by writing to him (how clever, a day for weeks. "I just kept on e-mailing him and telling him to check my music on Myspace. Until finally he replied, listened to my music and signed me up," Sean revealed.

His first single, "Beautiful Girls," recently went to the Teen Choice 2007 award for Choice Music R&B Track. "It is universal in nature since it tells of one falling in love and getting heartbroken, because one's love doesn't live up to your expectations," he explained.

Yes, he has fallen in and out of love. "I was going out with the most beautiful girl in school for two years but then she cheated on me with my best friend," he revealed.

Raised in Kingston, Jamaica, Sean said he had a rough childhood.

"I had a hard life," he confessed. "There was a time when I was living in a car with my mom. We were homeless and I was growing up faster than I should have. When I was 14, my mother was arrested for tax evasion. I am really close to my mom so when she was arrested, a big part of me was taken away too."

"My older sister stayed with me but then was also taken away for her involvement in my mother's crime. I slept on a bench in a bus stop for some time until I found refuge with an aunt in Boynton Beach, Florida."

Although he declared that his sister was released after four months, his music is still seeing time.

Turning the negative into positive, Sean started writing music. "I turned to music and kept myself motivated. I used all those stuff as my motivation and it got me to where I am today," he disclosed.

He added, "I like it when I know people are reacting to my music. I love to write music that will connect with the fans, whether they are 15 or 20 years old," he pointed out.

Staying clean and pure

Sean explained that he does not use profanity as he wants to be a role model to kids and "stay clean and pure."

He said he probably get his talent's leader surrounding the explained, "When my father wants something, he will do everything to get it. If he wants a hotdog, he will go to the grass to be able to get that hotdog. But, just like me, if I want a record deal, I will not stop until I get a record deal. I will focus. I will push myself for it."

If he find three wishes, what they would be?

"I wish my mom would get out of jail as soon as possible. I wish my album would go platinum. And I wish I would be a great artist."

Email the writer at jenepales_624@yahoo.com

Life's not all a comedy

By Hannah B. Cruz

WHILE EUGENE DOMINGO IS CONSIDERED one of the funniest actors in local show biz today, it's surprising that very little laughter was heard during this interview with business-like demeanor.

"I'm the serious type. I'm calm," said Eugene, a theater arts graduate of the University of the Philippines. "People are used to seeing me shouting around on TV and in the movies. If I'm like that in real life, I'd get a heart attack."

Known for his hilarious performances in comedies like "Ang Cute ng Ina Mo" and "Tj Ladlad Oras," Eugene tackles a different role—that of a social worker—in Dante Mendoza's "Batang Child."

The film, which premiered in the Directors' Fortnight section of the prestigious Cannes International Film Festival in May, explores the state of foster care in the Philippines.

EUGENE DOMINGO

Aside from "Foster Child," Eugene was also in the cast of Auteurs Salon's "Pisay" (2006) and "Jhil" (2005).

You described what you've done in independent films as something totally different from your mainstream work. How was it different?

Ever since I became known as a comedian, I felt as if people always expected me to play funny roles. At least in indie films, I get to play roles that I consider more challenging. Indie films are very much like theater for me—it's intimate. It's a breather. As an actor, I need balance. I don't want to be identified with just one genre. I will be bored to death.

As an actor, the challenge in working on "Foster Child" was that I was told not to act. I had to believe that I was indeed Ibarra, the social worker. I had to believe that the situations around me were actually happening. That helps me forget that I'm acting.

I portray the role of a teacher in "Pisay." I feel flattered whenever alumni of Philippine Science High School come up to me and tell me I reminded them of their years in the school. I just feel honored to be a features teacher because I used to fail my science subjects in high school.

Even though my daughter in the movie "Jhil" fell in love with another woman, my character did not divorce the child.

I'm like her in the sense that I'm never judgmental.

You like to involve yourself with issues that are troubling the industry. Do you think all actors should do the same?

I choose my battles. I strongly feel that if our children would get nothing from television but vulgarity, sleazy lang ang aabutan, let's all stop watching TV. I hope we'd come up with more children's shows. I hope we'd make TV viewing more worthwhile.

Training and discipline is the greatest asset every different from TV and the movies. How do you handle co-workers who are incompetent and unprofessional?

I'm very fortunate that so far, I've not encountered actors who are unprofessional. When I first worked on TV, I was lucky to have been able to work with the likes of Caroline Barreto, Gloria Romero and Nidael Antonello, who are all pros.

But in this business, a degree in theater arts doesn't really matter. What counts is your work attitude. I'm the type who really believes in discipline. Ayaw ko nang pabago-bago. I get frustrated with co-workers who are unable to deliver because they're irresponsible. I get turned off by actors who arrive late on the set, although that really doesn't affect my performance.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ennrie G. Verardo

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Edu: A good TV host lets guests shine

By Marinell H. Cruz

"IF YOU WANT TO EXCEL AS A host, be original. Offer something that hasn't been seen or heard of."

The rule style to Jhess Edu Manzano, one of the busiest TV hosts in the country today.

Known for his quiet wit and industrious humor, the 51-year-old actor and current chair of the Quezon Movie Desert hosts two game shows on ABS-CBN—"1 vs 100" and "Game KNB?"—plus the early morning variety program "Umagang Kay Ganda."

EDU MANZANO

Speaking on the launch of 9-Go energy drink outside his endorsers, Edu told the entertainment press: "Another aspect of effective hosting is, be a good listener. You should just be reacting to your guests' [on-]them claims."

Edu said he admired Jon Stewart ("The Daily Show") for the latter's "ability to converse intelligently about any subject—politics, entertainment, even literature."

He said he liked David Letterman's "impossible timing and off-the-wall style—a little

Edu: A good TV host . . .

Pretenge G3

scoring like that," Edu said.

Other TV hosts on Edu's list include Oprah Winfrey and Barbara Walters.

On the other hand, Edu's colleagues like his style, but teachers Jessica Soho and Korina Sanchez are "LBM," describing her as "unnatural."

John Lapus, of the talk program "Showbiz Central," says Edu is "my male counterpart—spontaneous, funny witty and smart."

For Nina Perdigo, another "EXK" co-host, says Edu is the "best host in the country."

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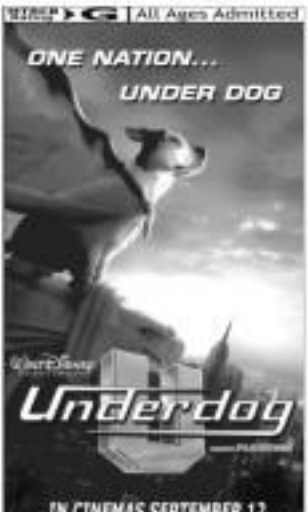

Pop and classical at George Tagle's first major concert

SHOW TIME

"SALUTE TO GEORGE: First Major Concert with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra" features classical singer George Simon Tagle on Sept. 13 at the Grosvenor Place Grand Ballroom, Ortigas Center, Pasig.

The concert will showcase Tagle's versatility as he mixes classical and pop, as well as interpret R&B, jazz and a cappella material.

Guest artists include Ivy Violan, pianist Angelo Ocio, soprano Rachelle Cervalan, pop singer Celia Hutchjeries, and Grace Angeles—an all-male group of classical pop tenors. Musical director is Gerry Matias.

Proceeds will benefit the Alay sa Kinabukasan Foundation. Call 9115615 or 4687209 for tickets.

GEORGE Tagle

'Power To Unite'

Donna Cruz Lustrisimo performs musical numbers and shares the spiritual life of her family on Sept. 13 in "Power To Unite with Divin," a new TV show that airs Tuesdays, 7:00-7:30 p.m. on SBN 6.

A combined religious and entertainment program hosted by Divin Top-Gel, "Power To Unite" premiered recently and featured His Eminence Ricardo Cardinal J. Vidal showing his fighter style; Hamaria Investor talking about her single-lifestyle; and the Teeching Family, regional winners of the 2nd National Catholic Family Bible Quiz, sharing how God works in their lives.

'Let's Kick Some BrASS!'

The Company's jams forces with the UP Jazz Ensemble in a big band concert, "Let's Kick Some BrASS!" debuting on Sept. 15, 8 p.m. at the Bayan Cou, ovation and Trade Center, Davao City.

Gala performance is on Oct. 13, 4 p.m. at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Tickets for the Davao concerts are available at UP Christmas Arts Center Ltd. 3008441, Sonic Boutique (2223807), Bigtree Rord (2270964) and Living Blend Inn (2233947/2215964).

For the CCP dates, call 8321704/8321125 loc. 1409/1410 or log on to tixbox.ccp.com.

Ka Freddie at LA Cafe

Folk music icon Freddie Aguilar performs on Sept. 22, Oct. 20, Nov. 17 and Dec. 22 at LA Cafe, corner M.H. Del Pilar and Soler Streets, Intramuros, Manila.

John Ford Coley's tour

John Ford Coley returns to the Philippines on a five-city concert tour dubbed "That Still We Too Love Me."

The tour opens on Oct. 12 at the Alive Theater, CCP Complex, Pasay City.

Call Ticketworld at 8121321 or Telemart at 8919999.

Tonight

Sweetlicious, 7:30 p.m. at Cuenca Arredondo, Pasay City.

Cinema 6 Break (9 p.m.) and Art Manoeuvre (10:12 pm) at BJTN Bar, 28 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati. Call 8995658 for inquiries/reservations.

Remy Morales at Mirk's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 1, Makati. Call 7574720 and 7574721.

DONNA Cruz Lustrisimo and TV host Divin Top-Gel

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